

Duncan Matheson

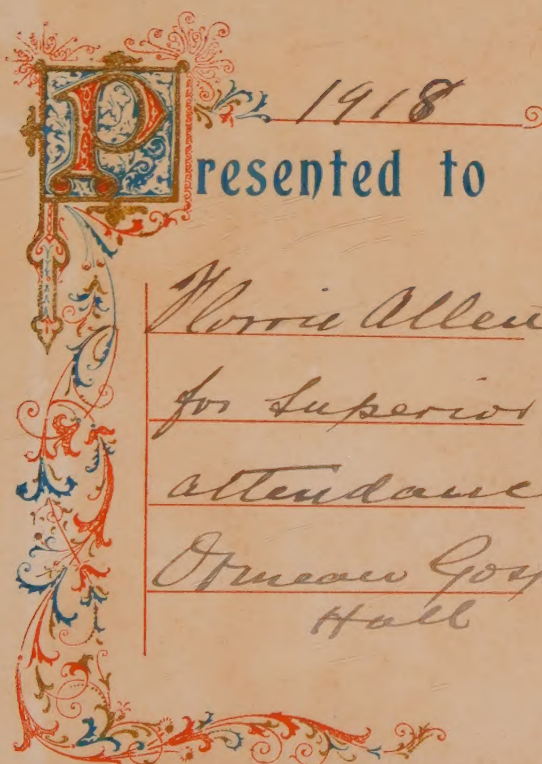
THE SCOTTISH
EVANGELIST

BY REV. JOHN
MACPHERSON



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LIFE AND LABOURS
OF
DUNCAN MATHESON.



Alfred Jones
in the Blessed hope
 Duncan Matheson

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OF
DUNCAN MATHESON

THE SCOTTISH EVANGELIST

BY THE
REV. JOHN MACPHERSON

AUTHOR OF
"THE CHRISTIAN HERO
ETC., ETC.

"Reality is the great thing:
I have always sought reality"

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P R E F A C E .

DURING his last days on earth Duncan Matheson, in accordance with the wishes of his friends, set himself to write an account of his own life. The effort proved too much for his enfeebled health ; and his autobiographic notes, stopping short at the beginning of his evangelistic course, were left in no fit state for publication. The facts recorded by his own hand have, however, been embodied in the present memoir ; and the narrative of his conversion, by far the most valuable portion of his hastily-written notes, has been given in his own words.

The cases of conversion described in illustration of the work of grace and the success of our evangelist are matters of fact of which I have the fullest knowledge, most of the individuals concerned being personally known to me ; but I have deemed it best not to give their names. On similar grounds I have also in several instances withheld the names of localities.

Many of the incidents narrated I learned from the lips of my lamented friend ; in fact, a great part of the volume has been derived from my recollection of the man and the work.

The best narrative of his evangelistic labours, I have reason to believe, was contained in his letters to his wife ; but these have been destroyed. Vexed at the too hasty and too loud trumpeting of results on the part of some, and convinced that thereby the Holy Spirit was grieved and discredit cast upon the work, he set his face against

PREFACE.

even the appearance of what he regarded as a great evil, and for several years wrote at the foot of every letter giving account of his labours, "Destroy this." The stern decree was only too faithfully obeyed. In this way, doubtless, he preserved a full consciousness of the purity of his motives—no light matter truly to a servant of Jesus Christ ; and however we may regret the loss of the letters, we cannot but admire the self-denying spirit of the man who thus deliberately sacrificed his own name at the shrine of his Master's glory.

This tribute to the memory of my truly noble friend I humbly commend to the Holy Spirit ; at the same time earnestly entreating my Christian readers to pray that the book, as an echo of the evangelist's voice, may prolong his extraordinary ministry and be the means of saving many souls.

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LIFE AND LABOURS
OF
DUNCAN MATHESON.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH AND BOYHOOD.

UNCAN MATHESON was born at Huntly, in Aberdeenshire, on the 22nd day of November, 1824. This little inland town, some of my readers may not know, is the capital of Strathbogie, a district now famous in the ecclesiastical history of Scotland as the scene of a fierce conflict, in the year 1842, between the church and the civil power. The fame of that struggle has sounded far beyond the shores of Scotland, and its issues are constantly growing more momentous with the revolving years.

Neither the village nor the adjacent country presents features very striking or interesting. The soil is not of a generous nature ; but its sons have developed the sturdiest manhood in its subjugation and culture. The climate, rigorously stern, is often in winter of arctic severity : but the keen biting winds seem only to have sharpened the people's wits ; the gloomy sky if it has made them *dour* has helped to make them sober-minded, and battling with storms and drifting snows has proved a good training for the battle of life. Bannocks of oatmeal and bickers of porridge, together with early and successful contendings with that great army of strong truths whose leader presents to every young Scot

this memorable challenge, "What is the chief end of man?" have contributed not a little in raising up generations of strong, free men, able to push their way and hold their own anywhere in the world. In fact, hard work, coarse but wholesome fare, a severe climate, the Bible, the church, the school, and the catechism, have conspired to develop in them the tougher elements of the Scottish character. The inhabitants of that north-eastern province are as hard as their native granite, as stern as their own winter, and of a spirit as independent as the winds that play on the summit of their lofty Benachee. In short, the people of Huntly are Aberdonians of the most Aberdonian type. Shrewd, hard-headed, rough-grained, having ever a keen eye to the main chance, and not to be overcome by force or over-reached by fraud, they are a people pre-eminently *canny* and Scotch.

In one of the plain homely dwellings, of which the Huntly of that day was almost entirely composed, the subject of this memoir first saw the light. His parents belonged to that better class of the common people whose intelligence, industry, thrift, God-fearing uprightness, and honest pride, have contributed so much to the prosperity and glory of their country. From his father, a Ross-shire man, connected with a family of some note in that county, young Matheson inherited the Celtic fire which fused all his powers into one great passion; whilst from his mother he seemed to derive the strong good sense, the irrepressible wit, and boundless generosity, that were among his chief characteristics. To his mother indeed, as in the case of many other men who in their day have been powerful workers of good and uncompromising enemies of evil, the boy, the man, and the Christian, owed more than pen and ink can set forth. Her loving and fervent spirit, her wise and gracious ways, impressed and captivated the warm-hearted and ingenuous boy; her prayers issued in his conversion after her gentle head had been pillowed among the clods; and her lovely memory glowing in his fancy became a force, not the less mighty for its gentleness, throughout his life. So true-hearted mothers often live in their strong sons, the little quiet rivulet somehow begetting the great broad river. Strong-willed and even wayward as was the boy, he loved and revered his mother with singular devotion.

The father, who for nearly thirty years occupied the humble but honourable post of mail-runner between Huntly and Banff, enjoyed but a slender income ; and it needed all the diligence and thrift of the mother to keep the house and five little children above want. They had their pinching times ; but pinching times have done much, under God, to develop the real strength of Scottish character. In after years, when Duncan Matheson had taken up his father Colin's business of mail-runner, with this difference, that the son carried letters for another King, even Christ, and ran upon a longer line than the Banff and Huntly road, often did he remember how "his poor dear mother used to sit till midnight mending and making their clothes, and yet the beggar was never sent empty from the door." Sometimes the brave little heart gave way, and the child covering his face with the bedclothes would sob, and long for the time when he should be able to aid his mother in the struggles of life. One day coming into possession of a small piece of money, earned by running a message for a neighbour, he took his stand at the window of a little shop, which seemed to embrace in its contents all that was desirable on earth, and there meditated a purchase. The ginger-bread men riding on ginger-bread horses did not much tempt him ; nor was he overcome by the little shining clasp-knife, so dear to the heart of boys. Remembering his mother, he invested his money in tea. Hastening home, he secretly deposited his purchase in the cupboard, and watched till he obtained a full reward in the glad surprise of his parent on finding her empty store thus unexpectedly and mysteriously replenished.

The lad was sent early to school, where he made rapid progress, his love of books being fostered by frequent contact with the teacher, who lodged in the house of the Mathesons. In those days there were two schools in Huntly, the parish school and an adventure school, between which there was a perpetual feud. Almost daily the boys met in battle, and young Matheson, whose martial spirit was thus early stirred, took an eager part in the fray. The school of that time wore an air of awful sternness and solemnity. The thong was real master. The impression made by the opening prayer was too often sadly undone by

impression of the *leather*, as it fell with unmitigated severity on the tortured fingers of some little rebel. Strange scenes, the result probably of that undue severity of government, were sometimes witnessed in the school of those days. A stream of water having been turned one day from a neighbouring lane into the schoolroom, the master proceeded as a matter of course to find out the author of the mischief. Young Matheson was unjustly charged, the real criminal having turned false witness; and loud protestations of innocence notwithstanding, Duncan must be flogged. Here the authority of the master failed. The lad's sense of innocence, stimulated by some other feeling not quite akin to innocence, roused him to self-defence; and amidst the cheers of the whole school the scholar beat the master, and reduced him to the necessity of a truce.

The master, who was an earnest Christian and a preacher of the gospel, did his duty faithfully and well; and Duncan Matheson never ceased to speak of him with feelings of deepest gratitude and esteem. The pains taken by the teacher to polish that rough but genuine Cairngorm were not thrown away.

In the matter of religion it was not a good time in those northern parts. *Moderatism*, which means a religion without earnestness, a form without life, and a gospel without grace, cast its deadly shadow over many a parish. Light, indeed, was beginning to dawn, the spirit that moved Chalmers was abroad, and when rare opportunity afforded men were listening to the ancient story of the cross as if it were a new thing. As yet, however, it was only dim dawn. Strange doctrines were given forth from the pulpit of many a parish church. One taught the people that if they paid their debts and lived a quiet life they were sure of reaching heaven. His brother in the neighbouring parish declared, on the other hand, that nobody can attain to assurance of salvation until the day of judgment, and that the children of God generally die under a cloud,—a doctrine he clenched with the scripture, "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." A third publicly stigmatized praying people as hypocrites. A fourth acknowledged his dislike of preaching by calling Sabbath "the nanging day." Another apologised to his audience for having once used "that offensive and unpolite

expression *hell*." Several of these pastors were famous for their skill in agriculture ; but while they kept a well-stocked farm-yard, their scanty supply of sermons grew more dry and mouldy year by year. The preaching was no more likely to awaken a slumbering congregation, than was the chirping of sparrows in the hedge to arouse the still, sad sleepers in the neighbouring kirkyard. A clear, full statement of "the finished work" of Jesus, as the one only and all-sufficient substitute and sin-bearer, was seldom heard. As for the grace of the Holy Spirit the people were no more taught to expect comfort from his fellowship than from the wind howling among the forest trees. In a certain parish contiguous to the district in which our missionary laboured, the minister was one day catechising the people, and put to a woman, noted for the then rare qualities of earnestness and zeal, the question, "How many persons are there in the Godhead?" To the astonishment of all present she replied, "There are *two* persons in the Godhead, the Father and the Son." Again the minister put the question, and this time with a caution. The same answer was given. "You see," said the parson, turning pompously to his elders, and glancing round upon the people, "you see what comes of high-flown zeal and hypocritical pretence. This woman thinks to teach others, and herself is more ignorant than a child. What gross ignorance ! Woman, don't you know that the correct answer is, "There are *three* persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," &c. "Sir," replied the woman, "I ken verra weel that the catechism says sae. But whether am I to believe, the catechism or yersel' ? We hear you name the Father, an' sometimes, but nae aften ye mak mention o' the Son ; but wha ever heerd you speak aboot the Holy Ghost ? 'Deed, sir, ye never sae muckle as tauld us whether there be ony Holy Ghost, lat alane oor need o' his grace." The minister stood rebuked ; and the people went away home to discuss and think.

The Lord's flock was scattered on the dark mountains. Some were wandering in a wilderness of perplexity ; some were sticking fast in the quagmire of earthliness ; some were ready to perish in deep pits of deadly error ; and sad were the bleatings of the sheep and the lambs as they

pined away in want. Meanwhile the description of unfaithful shepherds given by the prophet Isaiah was realised to the letter. "His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter. Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and to-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant." (Isaiah lvi. 10-12.)

But amidst the Egyptian darkness there was a people who had light in their dwellings. These were chiefly Seceders and Independents. Amongst the godly Dissenters there arose at this time a notable preacher, Mr. George Cowie, grand-uncle of Duncan Matheson. He was a man of rare humour, great force of character, and unbounded zeal; qualities in which his relative, the subject of this memoir, strikingly resembled him. Cowie was both pastor and evangelist. When he began his work in Huntly, where he was ordained as pastor of the Secession Church, he received a baptism of reproach and persecution. The haters of evangelical truth mobbed and pelted him; but he took all meekly, and though well-nigh blinded by showers of dirt and rotten eggs, he turned to his little band of followers and bravely said, "Courage, friends, courage! Pray on; the devil is losing ground."

Many who thirsted for the gospel came from distant parishes to hear this bold witness for the truth. On Sabbath morning you could see them gather on their way to Huntly; one from yonder turf cot in the midst of a wilderness of peat moss, where the only sign of life is the smoke curling to the sky; another from a little farm recently reclaimed from a marshy waste which anywhere out of Scotland would be regarded as an eternal morass; and a third from down a lonely glen where silence is seldom broken save by the cry of the wild bird. Thus they gather from their native mists in search of light,—broad-shouldered men with blue bonnet and plaid, thoughtful matrons with Bible and Psalm-book wrapt in clean white handkerchief, and neatly-dressed maidens, light-stepping but modest; and as they journey

together they talk of the things that concern the King. Reaching a little well at the wayside they sit down and refresh themselves. They need this rest, for they have come a long journey, some five miles, some ten, and some even fifteen. A drink from the well is followed by a draught of the pure water of life. With the blue heavens for a canopy, the green earth for a carpet, and the little birds for a choir, they worship God in that great temple of nature in which the religion of Scotland has oftentimes been baptised with the blood of her children. They sing the twenty-third Psalm. In grave, sweet melody their hearts go up to heaven in mingled exercise of faith, hope, and charity, as they repeat the most familiar of Scottish household words :

"The Lord's my shepherd ; I'll not want :
 He makes me down to lie
 In pastures green ; He leadeth me
 The quiet waters by."

To some of those God-fearers the song is a matter of faith rather than of feeling. To others it is a spring of hope and expectation, whilst in some hearts it stirs joy and love. There are those too who as yet knowing not conscious faith, or hope, or love, or joy, dimly discern the beauty of this holy, blessed, childlike worship, and secretly desire, almost without perceiving in themselves the desire, to know the happiness of that people whose God is the Lord.

When the Psalm is sung all heads are bent and a prayer follows—such a prayer as we have heard among the heather on a hill-side : "O God, oor souls are jist as dry as the heather : oor herts are as hard as the granite stane : but Thou that gi'est the draps o' dew to the heather, gie us the drappins o' thy grace this day, and let thy ain love licht upon oor hard herts like the birdie sittin' singin' on the rock yonner ; an' fill the souls o' thy fowk this day wi' peace and joy till they're rinnin' o'er like the water-spout on the brae. Lord, it 'll be nae loss to you, an' it 'll be a grand bargain for us, an' we'll mind ye on't tae a' eternity. Amen."

The Haldanes were at this time engaged in their noble evangelistic labours. Mr. Cowie permitted James Haldane to occupy his pulpit, whilst himself remained at the door to listen. At the close of the service the minister,

convinced that God was with the lay-preacher, rushed into the church and invited the people to return in the evening and again hear the stranger. For this encouragement given to an evangelist manifestly heaven-sent, Cowie was thrust out of the Secession. But he was not the man to be silenced. His faith and zeal rose to the occasion : he went on preaching and labouring for souls as he had never done before, and the result was the formation of an Independent Church. The light spread. The torch was rudely shaken, but the flame rose upon the night, and many afar off wondered and came to see. In barns and out-of-the-way places meetings were held ; and often in the open air the manly voice of George Cowie was heard calling sinners to the Saviour in terms he loved to repeat,—“There is life for a look ! there is life for a look !”

This faithful servant of God was consumed with zeal. He was sometimes so overpowered with a sense of the value of souls that he needed to be supported by the elders as he went from the vestry to the pulpit. Blessed, surely, are such ministers, and highly favoured the people who enjoy their ministry ! Speaking of preaching, Mr. Cowie used to say, “Go direct to conscience, and in every sermon take your hearers to the judgment-seat.” One day a preacher, who occupied his place, spoke as if the Holy Spirit was not needed by either saint or sinner. At the close of the service, Cowie stood up on the pulpit steps, and solemnly said, “Sirs, haud in wi’ your auld freen, the Holy Ghost, for if ye ance grieve Him awa, ye’ll nae get Him back sae easy.”

Here Mr. Rowland Hill used to preach with all his wonted dash and power. At a diet of catechising, a method of teaching to which some of the most valuable and characteristic elements of the old Scottish religion were due, the English evangelist was present and put a few simple questions. The answers were promptly and correctly given with the superadded request of an old man, “Gang deeper, sir, gang deeper.” Mr. Hill having expressed his satisfaction with the results of the examination, the aged enquirer asked and obtained permission to put a question. “Sir,” said he to Mr. Hill, “can ye reconcile the universal call o’ the gospel wi’ the doctrine o’ a partier elect ?” In reply Mr. Hill frankly admitted that while he held both the doctrine

of election and the universal call, he was unable to solve the theological problem proposed by the grey-headed enquirer.

Mr. Cowie exhibited fine tact in dealing with men. "One of his attached hearers was the wife of a wealthy farmer, who, after weeping and praying in vain for her ungodly husband, brought her grief before her pastor, whose preaching she could by no persuasion induce him to hear. After listening to the case, which seemed quite inaccessible, he enquired, 'Is there anything your good man has a liking to?' 'He heeds for nothing in this world,' was the reply, 'forbye his beasts and his siller, an' it be na his fiddle.' The hint was enough: the minister soon found his way to the farm-house, where after a dry reception, and kindly enquiries about cattle and corn, he awoke the farmer's feelings on the subject of his favourite pastime. The fiddle was produced, and the man of earth was astonished and charmed with the sweet music it gave forth in the hands of the feared and hated man of God. The minister next induced him to promise to return his call, by the offered treat of a finer instrument in his own house, where he was delighted with the swelling tones of a large violin, and needed then but slight persuasion from his wife to accompany her and hear his friend preach. The word took effect in conviction and salvation; and the grovelling earth-worm was transformed into a free hearted son of God, full of the lively hope of the great inheritance above."*

This good and faithful servant of Jesus Christ, loved and honoured over a wide extent of country, died and left behind him the precious legacy of many spiritual children bearing the likeness of his own hearty, thorough, downright Christian character. Thousands followed his body to the grave, and on his tombstone were inscribed the words of the prophet Daniel, "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." In after years his grand-nephew, Duncan Matheson, when newly ushered into the marvellous light of the gospel, used to kneel beside the grave in the silence and solitude of night, and cry mightily to heaven, praying that the mantle of his

* Life and Letters of Elizabeth, last Duchess of Gordon. By the Rev. A. Moody Stuart.

venerated relative might fall upon him, and that the words of the prophet might be illustrated in him also. That prayer was abundantly answered.

We are strangely linked to the past; its traditions, especially such as come to us through the channel of flesh and blood, go far to make us what we are. Though the Matheson family were connected with the Established Church, they had strong leanings to the godly Dissenters; and in his early life Duncan drank in the story and teaching of his uncle from his mother's lips. The banner which dropped from the hands of George Cowie was taken up and nobly sustained by Mr. Hill, the pastor of the Independent Church, and Mr. Millar, the minister of the Secession, faithful servants of Jesus Christ, whose indefatigable labours prepared the ground for the wider sowing and richer harvest of our time. One day the worthy pastor of the Independent Church laid his hand upon the head of the boisterously frank and manly boy as he romped on the street, and bestowed upon him a prayerful blessing. Did the man of God see in young Matheson a second George Cowie, and even then separate the lad unto the gospel of Christ by the laying on of believing hands? There are foretokens of a man's future that find no place in our philosophy. At any rate the susceptible heart of the boy was thus impressed, and he used to follow the godly minister upon the street with a curious and wondering reverence. Throughout life he never forgot the gentle hand laid upon his head—the blessing and the prayer.

From infancy up through boyhood the good angel of conviction never ceased to follow Duncan Matheson. Sometimes there is a lull of unholy peace; then comes a disturbed period when the gracious Spirit strives with the rebel heart. Now he seems near the kingdom of God; suddenly a back-wave of temptation carries him anew into the deep. Frequently he is all but overcome by the drawings of invisible love; but as yet young flesh and blood prove too strong for these gentle touches of grace. One evening he is passing along the street and hears the sound of praise issuing from a cottage where a prayer-meeting is in progress. A good impulse carries him to the window. Peering in at a chink, he sees the faces of the company

brightened up by no ordinary radiance, and as he listens he hears their glad voices singing,

“O greatly bless’d the people are
The joyful sound that know;
In brightness of thy face, O Lord,
They ever on shall go.”

His heart is touched; he wishes he were amongst them to share their joy; but like one who would purchase a pearl were it not for the greatness of the price, he goes away with nothing but vague longings and hesitating resolves. These feelings do not last long; they are but the morning cloud and early dew. Next day he is a very ringleader in persecuting the children of the saints, whom he mocks and calls by opprobrious names.

A special interest was taken in young Matheson’s spiritual welfare by James Maitland, an aged Christian and a convert of Mr. Cowie’s. This old disciple was always ready in his own quaint and homely way to testify to the truth and grace of God. When a shallow theorist one day attempted to make the way into the kingdom of heaven easy to the flesh, James said, “I ken verra weel that a human faith can receive a human testimony; but, man, dinna ye ken it needs a divine faith to receive a divine testimony.” To another who paid him a compliment for his Christian worth, he replied, “I sometimes wonner if I’m a Christian at a’; for ye ken we ocht to lay doon our lives for the brithren, but I can hardly bring mysel’ to like the cross-grained anes.” He kept an eye on the young people of the place, and his wise, loving counsels were not in vain. To a lad about to leave the town he said, “Young man, you are like a ship going to sea without compass or helm.” These words led to his conversion. Maitland’s heart was much drawn to Duncan Matheson, in whom he could discern not a little of the natural character of his minister and spiritual father. Duncan strove hard to keep out of the old man’s way, but being sent on an errand one day to Maitland’s house he was fairly caught. James shut the door on himself and the boy, and began to tell him the story of Mr. Cowie’s conversion. This done he brought the conversation to a practical bearing by asking the lad about his soul’s case. The answer was unsatisfactory.

Then followed homely tender words about "God's wonderfu' love to sinners," and "the warm hert o' Jesus yirnin' to save," and "the kind Spirit strivin' wi' a' his micht," with solemn remonstrance as well as touching appeal, not without some effect, since conscience was all on James's side. Duncan went away very unhappy. The hour of decision indeed had not yet arrived; but one gun on the rampart of unbelief had been spiked. The impression made by Maitland's faithful words and tender dealings was never wholly lost.

Speaking of this period he says, "My conscience often pricked me, and if the thunder rolled I went to prayer. I knew only the Lord's prayer, and used it as an incantation to ward off evil. If I saw a funeral I trembled, and thoughts of judgment pressed hard upon me." One evening his mother, who instead of always speaking directly to her children about salvation, wisely followed the method of reading aloud from some interesting book, had fallen upon a well-known illustration of the endlessness of eternity. Suppose a little bird comes once in a thousand years and carries away a particle of dust from yon lofty mountain, how vast a number of years must elapse ere the huge mass has been entirely removed! And yet when those countless myriads of years have come and gone, eternity will be no nearer an end than it was at first. What, then, will be the misery of the lost in the place where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched? Such was the impression made upon the boy's mind that he could not sleep, and spent a great part of the night in weeping. The germ of truth thus lodged by a mother's hand in the heart of her son was not lost. It did not indeed result in his immediate conversion, but it took hold of his spirit, and by the blessing of God became a great power in his soul; for throughout his entire Christian course one thought was never absent from his view, one motive never ceased to work mightily in his heart, one argument never failed to drop from his lips with amazing power on the ears of thousands, and that was *the endlessness of eternity*. Little did that mother dream of the great work she was doing as she read the simple illustration in the hearing of her boy. Little did she imagine the vast harvest to be reaped from that seedling, and the

mighty forces that were being set in motion by so gentle a touch.

The dread of future punishment held him in check, even in his most lawless days. "The eternity of it," he says, "more than anything else, awed me, and if I could have persuaded myself that after thousands of years the torments of hell should cease, I would have given full swing to my evil heart, and more madly than I was even then doing would have rushed on to eternal death."

The death of his sister Ann, "a sweet, holy child, who talked of Jesus with her latest breath," drew the furrows of conviction fresh and deep in his already well-ploughed heart; and as he stood by the grave, "the dull muffled sound of the clods dropping upon the coffin-lid seemed to ring into his conscience this one word, Eternity."

Sickness followed: it was another gentle messenger from Him whose name is Love. Many thorns now vexed his pillow; it was sovereign grace arousing him from his dangerous sleep. A host of evils seemed to surround him; it was a host of angels sent to shut him in and chase the wanderer home. As yet he saw not the Saviour; he saw only the clouds that are about his throne. The darkness which he imagined revealed the Avenger concealed his Redeemer, and the sounds that seemed to his awakened conscience to be the roll of the chariot wheels of death, were but the echoes of approaching salvation. Sometimes he would bury his fears in the grave of good resolution, and write upon the tombstone, "By and by;" but from the dead his convictions would arise with ghastly horror, and then his wretchedness, overflowing its banks, would pour itself out in wrathful torrents, making the whole house unhappy and even afraid. They knew not the terrible conflict that raged in his breast; they saw not the misery of the maddened spirit wrestling with the Almighty, and heard not the despairing cry, "Would God I had never been born!"

Before his mind's eye one great truth now began to appear in hazy outline. The absolute necessity of being born again was beginning to take hold of his thoughts. It was a point gained—one step towards the light. Not seldom did he pray God to convert him, though, like Augustine, he was fain to add "not yet." Some friends

perceiving his talents advised him to enter the University, and offered him a bursary on condition of his studying for the ministry—a course which his parents earnestly desired him to follow; but he refused, saying with characteristic frankness, “A minister ought to be a converted and a holy man. I am not that. I cannot do it.” When he and two companions were urged to become members of the church, straightforward as usual he replied, “I am not converted, and you know it. G—— is not converted, nor is D——. We are on the brink, and you would push us over. You would have us go to the Lord’s table in our sins, and then on Sabbath evening you would pray for the unworthy communicants.” Turning to his companions he said, “Come away;” and as he went out of the minister’s presence he said to himself, “The whole thing is a sham. I may as well be an infidel.” In all this there may have been a lack of courtesy, and a little pride; but he had noticed the unfaithfulness of certain pastors in the admission of young communicants, and the sad effect on the communicants themselves, who made a pillow of the Lord’s table for their deadly slumbers, and his honest spirit rebelled against what he believed to be an unholy sham.

The disruption of the Church of Scotland with its stirring events drew near. Patronage was doing its evil work. The conflict between the Church and the civil power was becoming more fierce and uncompromising. A minister was thrust into the parish of Marnoch against the will of the people. Duncan Matheson was present at the forced settlement, and, young though he was, warmly sympathised with the Christian flock, whose rights were thus trampled under foot. The scene made a deep impression on his heart. But not until he submitted himself to the Lord Jesus did he rightly understand the great question of the time,—the independence of the Church, and the Crown rights of the Saviour as her sole King and Head. At this time able and faithful ministers of the gospel were sent down to Strathbogie, the scene of conflict. The word was with great power. On one occasion Mr. Moody Stuart preached a sermon on the strait gate, which Duncan Matheson says was blessed to many souls. On another occasion the Lord’s Supper was dispensed by Mr. Cumming, of Dunbarney, and Mr. M’Cheyne,

Dundee. The people met in the open air and sat upon the grass listening to the word. In the afternoon the sky darkened, and the thunder pealing overhead added an awful solemnity to the service. In the evening Robert M'Cheyne preached with "Eternity stamped upon his brow." "I think I can yet see his seraphic countenance," says Matheson, "and hear his sweet and tender voice. I was spell-bound, and could not keep my eyes off him for a moment. He announced his text,—Paul's thorn in the flesh. What a sermon! I trembled, and never felt God so near. His appeals went to my heart, and as he spoke of the last great day in the darkening twilight, for once I began to pray. At the close he invited all those who were anxious to retire to the chapel. Here began a tremendous struggle in my heart, a struggle I can recall as if it had been but yesterday. I looked to see if my special friend D. McP—— was going in, but I could see him nowhere. He afterwards told me he was looking for me with a like desire. Were he to go in, I would. Were he to be a Christian, I would. Slowly I went through the darkness, and reached the chapel, with the words, 'Quench not the Spirit,' ringing in my ears. I looked in at the window and saw many there I knew. I hesitated: I approached the door and looked in. Hastily I turned back. The die was cast. The tempter whispered, 'Another time.' Alas! alas!

'I chose the world and an endless shroud.'

Oh the long-suffering of God! Then and there how justly might God have said, 'Let him alone.' I deserved it. I was near the kingdom: I stood trembling on the threshold: I did not enter in. My case should lead no one to presume, not one in thousands, perhaps, in such a state as mine was,—trifling with God—is ever saved. It is a solemn thing to say *to-morrow* when God says *to-day*; for man's *to-morrow* and God's *to-day* never meet. The word that comes from the eternal throne is *now*, and it is a man's own choice that fixes his doom."

After this grieving of the Holy Ghost, Duncan Matheson tried hard "to forget all about eternity, and took to novel-reading." For a season he seemed to be too successful: he was intoxicated with the vanities of fiction, and plunged

into all but utter oblivion of God. It was probably owing to this sad experience that he never ceased to deplore the injurious effect of novel-reading on the minds and hearts of the young, and to denounce in no measured terms the conduct of Christians and ministers who give too great encouragement to indulgence in the sensational literature of our day. He once found a trashy work of fiction on the pillow of a dying person. No marvel, then, if he spoke strongly of the evil. From Dreamland into Eternity—what a transition !

CHAPTER II.

HIS YOUTH AND CONVERSION.



THE time had arrived when Duncan Matheson, now sixteen years of age, must decide as to his future calling. His education was good for his years, his talents were of a superior order, and he might have entered the University with the fairest prospects. But fond as he was of learning, and ambitious of rising in the world, the conditions attached to his enjoyment of a college education were such as he could not accept. He was unconverted, and he would not be a minister because he could not be a hypocrite. His novel-reading had set him a dreaming ; he would become a sculptor. The mallet and chisel were his fascination ; Rome and the ancient masters rose before the eye of fancy ; and visions of success and glory dazzled his view. But how is he to climb so lofty a steep ? He boldly resolves to plant his foot on the lowest possible round of the ladder : he will begin his career of fame as a stone-cutter. His general talents, and in particular his turn for mechanics, seemed to mark him out for the occupation of a builder. Accordingly he was apprenticed to a master, and sent to hew his native sandstone at Kildrummie, where he wrote his first letter to his friends at Huntly. Here, as he tells, romance is quickly changed for reality. At the end of six months the stone-hewing is exhausted, and his master

sends him to the quarry. This is going down the ladder, not up; and here his apprenticeship ends. From Kildrummie he goes to Banff, where his quick parts procure him employment in the building of a bank. He saves all he can of his wages; and although his mother needs not his aid, his affectionate heart finds an unspeakable joy in sending her all his savings.

Whilst he is hewing stones the Divine Worker is busy with mallet and chisel of sharp conviction and providential dealing upon his rough granite nature. He would be a sculptor, a builder, a worker of great works. The Master of all masters had another design, a better way, and was even now rough-hewing this proud spirit, and training the young tradesman to be a sculptor of souls and a builder of God's temple. There is no rest in the young man's spirit; he will not have religion, and yet he cannot do without it. He goes to hear the late estimable minister of Banff, Mr Grant. The subject of discourse is "A good man." Matheson is convinced by a clear statement of the truth that no man can be really good, good in the sight of God, who is not regenerate. He next goes to hear the venerable John Murker, minister of the Independent Church in the same town. The preacher is that day reasoning, like Paul, on temperance, righteousness, and judgment to come. Trembling under the word, the young stone-cutter goes away resolved to hear the faithful preacher no more. He then turns his steps to the neighbouring town of Macduff, and listens for a season to Mr. Leslie, the late earnest and devoted minister of the Free Church; but in vain. What he really sought for, though he did not know it, was a gospel that would give him rest without repentance, and salvation without a sacrifice of self.

Work failing he returned home, bade farewell to his father's house, and carrying with him the counsels and prayers of his mother, who was then in declining health, he went to Edinburgh. Here he lodged with a godly couple, who he says did all they could for his soul. The providential hammer and chisel were again at work, and the Spirit of grace plied him in various ways. He must needs sit under the most faithful ministry he can find, and accordingly goes to hear Mr. Moody Stuart. No sooner is he seated than a

lady enters the same pew, and leaning her head on the book-board engages in secret prayer. Matheson is self-condemned; conscience upbraids him for his prayerlessness. He is now at the preacher's mercy; the truth spoken with faithful plainness and holy fervour deepens his unrest into anguish, and he goes away saying to himself, "I cannot bear this; if I am to come here, I must be converted." The evil spirit of unbelief triumphed; he resolved to return to that church no more. During the rest of the summer he entered no place of worship, but spent his Sabbaths in walking abroad and in novel-reading. He dared not open the Bible; the very sight of it pierced his heart with an indescribable pang. He tried hard to avoid everything suggestive of eternity. Daily did he flee from the presence of the Lord; and often did he rebelliously banish from his mind the thoughts by which the Holy Spirit was striving to draw him to the Saviour.

His fellow-workmen were for the most part Godless, drunken, and dissipated in the extreme. But he was preserved from joining in their follies; he never once could be induced to enter a public-house; and he was often shocked and saddened at the terrible miseries which these free-thinkers and free-livers were constantly bringing on themselves. If the fear of God did not restrain him, he remembered the prayers, the counsels, and the tears of his mother. When about to err, her gentle reproof sounded in his ear. In his sleep he seemed to see her beckoning him to the way of righteousness; and when all else failed, one monitor never failed effectually to warn him away from the gates of evil; that monitor was the remembrance of his mother's hollow and ominous cough. It is told of Simon Peter that throughout his life the hearing of a cock crow at any hour, and under all circumstances, caused him to burst into tears. Such was the power of that one look of love that melted the sinning disciple's heart, and reclaimed the wanderer. By how little a thing can God hold fast a strong man, and accomplish a great work! From the day he parted with his mother till the day of his death, Duncan Matheson, manly and brave-hearted though he was, could never hear the cough of the consumptive without being deeply moved. The cords of love twined by a parent's hand

around his heart he could not undo ; and it may be safely asserted that except the grace of God nothing is more powerful than the wise affection of a mother.

One night he was induced by his fellow-workmen to go to an infidel meeting ; but just as he was about to enter the room he remembered that the eye of God was upon him, he seemed to hear his mother's counsel, and her dying cough. It was enough. He suddenly stopped, turned back, fled from the place, and went home.

When, many years afterwards, he sought for his former companions in toil, he found that "most of them filled a drunkard's grave ; not one of them was known to have turned to God." Well might he exclaim, as he did, "Oh, the wondrous grace of God to me !"

Although careful of his morals, he hated all close dealing about his soul. This was the sore part which could not bear to be touched. On one occasion he met a faithful Baptist minister, who put the "one thing needful" plainly before him ; but young Matheson adroitly shifted the ground by raising the question of Infant Baptism, which proved a too successful diversion from the great question.

In October, 1845, he was called home to see his mother die. The last year of her life was the brightest ; she had reached Pisgah and could see the Land of Promise. She spoke to her son of Christ ; entreated him to follow the Saviour ; and charged him to meet her in heaven. Taking his hand in hers she bade him farewell, and then gently fell asleep in Jesus. Again, in the hour of grief divine love assailed the stubborn heart, but as yet the only result was a resolution to arise and seek the Lord. The noblest affections of our nature, and the bitterest sorrow of life, alike and unitedly fail to bring sinners to the Saviour.

After building a house for his father and the family, he returned to Edinburgh with a strange impression, of which he spake to his friends, that either he should die or be converted there. Thus the all-wise and gracious Spirit condescends to seek admission into our evil hearts by the lowest door. By putting before us the alternative of death or life, he appeals to our self-interest and our fears, if by any means He may obtain a footing within us for the furtherance of his merciful design.

In Edinburgh he strove to forget his good resolutions, and went on much as before, guarding his morals, shutting out conviction, and making no surrender to the Lord Jesus. Bent on professional success, he gave himself to the study of drawing and the acquisition of useful knowledge, with praiseworthy diligence improving his mind. To keep his thoughts occupied, and his heart quiet, he resorted to Freemasonry, which, as he acknowledged, did his conscience no good; for he found the freedom not such as he needed, and the secret no substitute for the mysteries of the kingdom of God.

One day a discussion on the evidences of the truth of Christianity arose among the stone-cutters. Duncan Matheson was the champion of the Bible. The leading sceptic, beaten in argument, assailed religion through the inconsistencies of its friends, declaring that Matheson was the only consistent Christian he had ever met. This compliment to his external morality, instead of pleasing his vanity, aroused his conscience, and he secretly charged himself with sheer hypocrisy in defending the truth, to whose divine power he felt in his heart he was an utter stranger. Another day, seeing a fellow-workman look sad, he expressed his sympathy, and found the man was distressed about his sins. Matheson took him aside, and although himself ignorant of the righteousness of God, and justification by faith in the Lord Jesus, directed him as best he could to the path of life. But this act recoiled on himself, and his conscience, now constantly awake, began to upbraid him. "You're a hypocrite," said he to himself. "You point others to Christ, and all the while you are treading the way to hell yourself." Then followed a fierce struggle between light and darkness; his soul was tortured almost to madness—a crisis was at hand.

His state at this time is by no means uncommon. On the one hand his conscience enlightened by the law of God suffered him not to plunge into the pleasures of the world, whilst on the other hand he knew not the peace of God. He could not forget God, and when he remembered God he was troubled. Poised between heaven and earth, as it were, he had religion enough to make him careful and sad, but not enough to make him holy and happy. Into infi-

delity he dared not plunge. Two convictions, like two unseen hands, held him fast. The one, firm belief in regeneration as a great fact essential to salvation ; the other, an undoubted consciousness that he was not born again. As yet, however, regeneration, if an acknowledged necessity, seemed a dark and uninviting mystery. Thorns and briars of the wilderness were now to be his teachers. He was to learn the way of salvation in a fire that consumes everything but truth. Let us hear his own story.

“On Thursday, 25th Oct., 1846, being the fast-day before communion, I attended Lady Glenorchy’s church, where I heard Mr. A. Bonar, biographer of M’Cheyne, preach on the portion of the wicked in Psalm xi., ‘Upon the wicked He shall rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and an horrible tempest : this shall be the portion of their cup.’ I felt as he proceeded as if all were to myself. I dreaded the portion I was about to receive. I knew I deserved it. I left the church weeping, but tried to hush my fears by fostering in my mind a purpose of being converted that day twelve months. I had the notion that I could be converted when I liked : I had only to begin praying, and reading, &c., and then all would come right. Fatal delusion ! There are gales of mercy, there are tides of grace, which do not always wait for us. It will always be man’s inconvenient season when it is God’s convenient time. I was afraid to return to the church in the evening. Satan furnished me with a pillow on which to sleep. It was this : ‘If you are to be converted you will be converted ; if not, you cannot help it.’ I took the opiate greedily, and was rocked to sleep in the devil’s cradle.

“Many strike on this rock ; many a noble ship has been dashed to pieces here. This is not Calvinism, but fatalism. Can the husbandman expect to reap if he does not sow, or the sailor reach the port if he does not spread the sail to catch the breeze ? What sick man would say, ‘If I am to get well I shall, no matter though a physician be not called or medicine taken.’ Of all preachers of election, Satan is the worst. He distorts that glorious truth, the first link in the golden chain of man’s salvation. He hides the blood of Christ through which sinners should behold it. He keeps out of sight the only decree with which sinners have to do,

viz., 'He that believeth not shall be damned.' 'You are not elect,' said the adversary to a sorely-trying Christian. 'Elect!' replied the man of God. 'Have you seen the book of God? Liar, get you hence; I have had more than ye ever had—an offer of Jesus Christ, and I have taken Him.'

"Next day I was sad, and unable to smile; but I tried to conceal my state. Sermon after sermon rose to mind, and my dying mother's counsels flashed into my heart. When the church bells began to ring on Saturday, two fellow-workmen, G. T. and M. T., infidels, began to curse and swear, blaspheming especially the Lord's Supper. Shocked, I could have fled from the place; and the prayer came into my heart, 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.' Then a voice seemed to say, 'How do you take the name of Father into your lips, seeing you reject Christ? Your hell will be deeper than theirs; for you know, and do not. God is not your Father: Satan is.'

"I could work no more, and I went home to ponder and weep. The arrow was driven home; and this time I did not seek to withdraw it. On Sabbath morning I was early astir, and, Bible in hand, was the first at church. In serving a table, Mr. Bonar said, 'This is a feast of love, the deepest love.' A voice seemed to ask me, 'Why are you not at it?' My heart was thrilled. I looked round, and saw no one. The question drove me from the church, and I rushed home. Even in this solemn hour I dared dally with my convictions, and went to see a friend, resolved to shun the church lest I should be tormented afresh. My heart was too full to conceal my thoughts, and I began to speak about religion. The topic being manifestly disagreeable, I left the house with feelings of wounded pride. Reaching the Calton Hill, I looked down upon the city, with its thousands of gleaming lights, and upward to the stars, which seemed to shine most sweetly upon me. I felt inwardly urged to go to church. I went with reluctance, and almost not knowing what I was doing, or whither I was going. I became desperate and passed the church door, but returned as if some invisible power moved me against my will. Again, when I was about to enter, I tore myself away. Two powers seemed to be lugging me hither and thither. Again I returned, and

with a bound crossed the threshold, and mounting the gallery stairs took my seat in the passage. I felt I was a poor, miserable castaway. The sermon was nearly finished. One showed me the text: 'The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty.' (Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7.) Mr. A. Bonar was preacher, and had come to the words, 'will by no means clear the guilty.' In a moment I felt the burning, piercing eye of God upon me. A mountain of wrath seemed to crush me down; and hell was opened beneath me. All round about me seemed to be on fire. Louder than the loudest thunder came the words: 'By no means clear the guilty;' and, 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.' The congregation was dismissed; the people departed; but I remained fixed to the spot. Some as they passed gave me a look of pity. At last I rose and reeled home to my lodgings, realising with awful vividness God, heaven, hell, judgment, and eternity. Falling on my knees I uttered my first real prayer, 'God be merciful to me, a sinner.' I was now thoroughly awakened, but I was not saved.

"When the eyes are opened by the Holy Ghost, how differently are all things seen: they stand forth then in their true light. I saw the mass around me hurrying unsaved to eternity. I wondered they could laugh. It seemed to me like the condemned dancing on the scaffold. The heavens seemed as if clothed in sackcloth. Wherever I went I felt the burning eye of God upon me; and the threatenings of the Word came like peals of artillery in quick succession. I feared I should drop into hell at every step, and, like most other awakened sinners, I began to work for life. The language of my heart was, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay Thee all.' How I did pray, and agonise, and suffer! I was on the wrong track, and did not know that

" 'Doing is a deadly thing,
Doing ends in death.'

I began to read many chapters, thinking that would do me

good. I prayed all day long, but I was no better. If a tear started to my eye I felt proud of it, and thought surely now Jesus will regard my case. I had a long stair of seventy steps to climb to my room : at every step I uttered a prayer. Like Luther as he ascended the steps in the church at Rome, I groaned out a petition for deliverance ; but no voice came to me saying, 'The just shall live by faith.' I laboured to make of my works a ladder to heaven. I put my anxiety in place of Christ ; and instead of seeking the One to be believed in, I set out in search of faith. Many a weary hour I spent trying to discover what faith is. I read all the books I could find, and searched the Word of God. Faith ! faith ! faith ! was still my cry. Oh, if I had faith ! The Star of Bethlehem was shining brightly before me. Jesus was standing near. He was uttering his voice, 'Look unto Me, and be ye saved.' But I passed Him by.

"I went to a minister in Edinburgh, who began to tell me how good a thing it was to be awakened, and with a view to my being comforted applied passages of scripture that belong only to the people of God. He urged me to hope, instead of bidding me believe. Thus many are led to hope they may be saved, and rest there, instead of obeying the command of God to 'believe on Him whom He hath sent.' The effect was, I became proud of my convictions ; my fears were hushed ; for some days I felt great self-satisfaction ; and, thinking that He who had begun a good work would carry it on, went smoothly.

"Some days after this I was startled by finding my heart beginning to love things I had forsaken, and then came the terrible question, What if this is false peace ? I felt I had not taken hold of Christ, and something said, Now or never ! now or never ! Make sure work for eternity !

"How few can deal with anxious souls ! Here was a good man settling me on my lees, taking the children's bread and giving it to a dog. He had no right to give me any promise addressed to the children of God. The promises are all yea and amen, but only in Christ Jesus. From Genesis to Revelation the promises belong to the Christian : they are his in Christ. Many have gone down to hell, pillowing their head on a promise, but not taking Christ. The good man was wrong in applying to me the text.

'Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ' (Phil. i. 6); for it refers to the work of sanctification, and as yet I was not justified.

"Mr. Cowie used to say, 'Some get such a fright at Sinai that they are in danger of running past Jerusalem;' that is to say, the very depth of their convictions may prevent them from entering the kingdom, for fear their peace may not be right. So it was with me. Fearing lest I should come short of eternal life, I cared not what happened if only I might be really saved.

"I sought my old friend John Cameron, who wept in his sympathy with me, and took me to his minister, Christopher Anderson (Baptist), author of the 'Annals of the English Bible.' This devoted man listened to my story, told in a romantic style; for I spoke of my sufferings as if I was passing through purgatorial fires. He saw I was lifted up, and said, 'Young man, were I to say I am pleased with you, you would go down that stair in a happy frame, but you are yet far from the kingdom of God. You have never yet dealt with the justice of God. His justice in condemning you for breaking his law has never yet entered your thoughts. I see you are angry with God for not giving you salvation as the reward of works. But it must be grace from first to last.' After a few words he told me to go. I thought it very harsh. I seemed cut off from all hope. I reeled to the door, and when I reached the street I felt shut up to God and alone with Him, and exclaimed, 'O God, it shall henceforth be Thee, and Thee alone.' After this I desired that everything might be settled between God and myself, and I prayed that every truth might be burnt into my heart by the Holy Ghost.

"Wearied and anxious, I left for home. A great change was seen in me. My fierce temper was checked: the lion had thus far become a lamb. All the town heard of it, and pitied the poor lad who had, as they thought, gone mad. Old companions who I feared would hinder me never came near me. Faith was still the prevailing question. The doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin I could not see, and I rebelled against the sovereignty of God, and thought He dealt hardly with me. Slowly the truth in regard to

imputation was opened up. Dimly I began to see that I had nothing but unholy thoughts, words, or deeds, and that for these I must die. I saw that Jesus only had holy thoughts, words, and deeds, and that these were placed to my account the moment I believed. I wanted a righteousness in which I could appear before God, and slowly Jehovah-Tsidkenu, the Lord Himself our Righteousness, shone forth in all his glory.

"I was standing on the 10th December, 1846, at the end of my father's house, and meditating on that precious word which has brought peace to countless weary ones: 'God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' (John iii. 16.) I saw that God loved me, for I was one of the world. I saw the proof of his love in the giving of his Son Jesus. I saw that 'whosoever' meant anybody and everybody, and therefore *me, even me*. I saw the result of believing—that I would not perish, but have everlasting life. I was enabled to take God at his word. I saw no one, but Jesus only, all in all in redemption. My burden fell from my back, and I was saved. Yes, saved! That hour angels rejoiced over one more sinner brought to the Saviour, and new songs rang through the courts of that city to which I had now got a title, and of which I had now become an heir. Bunyan describes his pilgrim as giving three leaps for joy as his burden rolled into the open sepulchre of Christ. I could not contain myself for joy. I sang the new song, salvation through the blood of the Lamb. The very heavens appeared as if covered with glory. I felt the calm of a pardoned sinner; yet I had no thought about my safety. I saw only the person of Jesus. I wept for my sin that had nailed Him to the cross, and they were tears of true repentance. Formerly I had set up repentance as a toll between me and the cross; now it came freely as the tear that faith wept. I felt I had passed from death unto life—that old things had passed away, and all things had become new.

"I wondered I had stumbled at the simplicity of the way. I saw everything so plain that I longed to go and tell all the world. I felt as if I could at once convince the most sceptical and the most hardened; and that if I met a

thousand Manassehs I could say, 'Yet there is room.' I went everywhere, telling my glad story. Some even of the saints looked incredulous. Others, like the elder brother in the parable, did not like the music and the dancing. They had never left their Father's dwelling; they had never been sin-sick, and knew not what it is to be healed; no fatted calf had been killed for them. These warned me against enthusiasm, and exhorted me to be sober-minded. One old man told me I was on the mount, but would soon be down again. Another said I needed great humility; but I went on singing my song. Prayer had given place to praise, and night and day for more than three days I continued to thank God for 'his unspeakable gift.' I longed to die that I might sin no more, and discover more fully the height and the depth, the length and the breadth of that love which I now knew 'passeth knowledge.'"

CHAPTER III.

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE.

"He knoweth the way that I take; when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."—*Job* xxiii. 10.

"I asked the Lord that I might grow
In faith, and love, and every grace;
Might more of His salvation know,
And seek more earnestly His face.

"'Twas He who taught me thus to pray,
And He I trust has answered prayer;
But it has been in such a way
As almost drove me to despair."



YOU have seen a bright week of too early spring. The sun has suddenly poured down an unusual warmth. The brooks and streams emancipated from the frost begin to babble afresh. The little birds are full of joy, and warble a welcome to the genial year. The buds are swelling, here and there: flower peeps out, and the first tint of greenness is upon the earth. Unexpectedly the

sun, as if he had but mocked, withdraws his smiling favours ; frost, as if he had lain in ambush, returns with his cruel bonds ; the more adventurous flowers are ruthlessly slain ; the birds are dumb with amazement and sorrow ; and all the voices of nature are again hushed. Life and death are now fiercely struggling ; but the former, though for a while overborne, at length wins.

To this the spiritual world is not without its parallel. So it fell out in the experience of Duncan Matheson. His few days of enlargement and joy were followed by a weary season of bondage and misery. His song of triumph was quickly followed by the burning thirst of unsatisfied spiritual desire, the bitter waters of a *Marah* experience, and all the anguish and travail of the wilderness. It was as when the sun has just arisen upon some benighted traveller, and he is making his escape from fearful dangers amidst dazzling floods of light. Suddenly again it becomes pitch dark, and night without a star overshadows his path. During those years the young Christian's joy, if not also his faith, suffered an eclipse. Like a lamb bleating for its lost mother, he went about during those weary months bemoaning himself with piteous lamentations and sorrow. But a fighting faith is as precious as a resting faith, though not so pleasant ; and stern battle is the way to victory.

"Gradually," he says, "my joy began to abate. I had been soaring on the eagle wings of praise, but now my song failed. At any rate, I thought, I am free of sin ; but, alas, I soon discovered that in my flesh dwelleth no good thing. I could see two distinct principles at work in me—the flesh and the Spirit. To an old Christian of experience I complained that I was dead.

"'Dead !' said he with a curious twinkle in his eye ; 'you are a curiosity. I never heard a dead man speak before. There comes nae a sigh frae a coffin, and they never cry feich in the grave. Ye're nae dead, but feelin' deadness. After having been dandled on the knees of consolation you must be weaned, and go and fecht the battles of the Lord.' This gave me a little comfort, but only a little.

"Young converts live more by sense than faith, and they must be taught that Jesus Himself, and not the comforts He gives, is their life. The weaning time is a critical

period ; then it is a man's Christian character is stamped. Skilful teachers are needed to show the workings of nature and grace, to separate the precious from the vile, so that he who begins in the Spirit may not be led away to seek perfection in the flesh. I was now in a wilderness, sorely tempted of the devil. The fountains of the great deep were broken up, Satan came down on my soul like a sweeping avalanche, and I was tempted to curse God and die. I staggered beneath my burden day and night for nearly two years. Terrible were the fiery darts with which I was assailed. Horrible and unutterable thoughts of God, of the Holy Ghost, and of Jesus, were injected into my mind. If I began to sing, the very note seemed to be changed into a blasphemy on the tip of my tongue, and many a time have I had to put my fingers in my ears and my hand on my mouth. These bolts of hell caused me indescribable anguish and sorrow, and never till I saw they were not mine but Satan's did I get deliverance from them.

"Sometimes he tortured me about election ; sometimes he suggested that my former joy was only the joy of the stony ground hearers ; sometimes that I had fallen away, and that according to the Word of God in the Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. vi. 4-6, it was impossible for me to be renewed unto repentance. The dread of apostasy hung over me like a sword from which I could not escape. The journal of my spiritual life I burned, that there might be no record of my apostasy left behind me. Above all, I was tempted to believe I had committed the unpardonable sin—the sin against the Holy Ghost. 'You have blasphemed,' said the tempter one day. 'Go and take your fill of the world ; mercy is not for you.' I left the house, but had only gone a little way when I was compelled to return. Taking up the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' I read a note, which said, 'If you have any desire to be saved, if you wish you had not sinned against the Holy Ghost, you have not done it.' I was somewhat relieved, and began afresh.

"When I struggled, Satan said it was of no use ; when I rested, he taunted me with sloth, and said, 'How can you get the blessing when you are sleeping?' Sometimes he said, 'Where is your joy ? Are not wisdom's ways ways of pleasantness ? Her paths are paths of peace.' I was tempted

to Atheism, to Unitarianism, and was continually urged to take life away. Oh the agony of those months! I suffered till my frame was sadly reduced. Often did I hurry to the hill-side, and oftener to the banks of the river, and my weary wail, 'Oh that I knew where I might find Him!' mingled with the flow of the dark waters. But never was I desirous of giving up. Eternity was stamped on my eye-balls. I had seen a sight which dimmed the glory of all else.

"The cross, the cross! the Christian's only glory,
I see the standard rise;
March on, march on! the cross of Christ before thee;
That cross all hell defies.

'The cross, the cross! redemption's standard raising,
I see the banner wave;
Sing on the march, salvation's Captain praising;
'Tis Christ alone can save.

'The crown, the crown! Oh, who at last shall gain it?
That cross a crown affords;
Press on, press on with courage to obtain it;
The battle is the Lord's.'

"I had now and again sweet, short tastes of coming glory. I felt as if I could have struggled centuries to reach the goal at last. 'I was persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.' Though for the most part I groaned out, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' yet there were moments when I could say, 'I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' Dark indeed was the night, and starless the sky, but hope bore me up, and I felt an unseen hand supporting me; and when the dark veil was for a little drawn aside, I could realise the verse of Cowper—

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps on the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

A portion of the diary mentioned above escaped the fire. A few extracts from it will serve to illustrate his state of mind, and the fiery conflicts through which he was then passing. Perhaps it will encourage some poor struggler to hold on his way through fire and water till he gets into the "wealthy place."

"January 2nd, 1847. When I awoke in the morning, all my thoughts were evil and good mixed; evil thoughts preponderating. Alas! what are my thoughts but evil? What my prayers but sin? What my desires but mixed with self? Were I left to my own heart I would perish. Throughout the day I have thought awful thoughts, hard, wicked, unbelieving thoughts of God. Satan has been raging like a lion, seeking to devour me, my own heart helping him. When I think of these thoughts I can well say that God for one of them could justly cast me off. Prayed much for the Holy Spirit, without whose aid I can see and do nothing. Tried to rest all my thoughts on Jesus, but it is hard to do so. I am always running after something of my own. More settled just now (evening). Very much in need of a humble heart; clearer views of Jesus; a heart to acknowledge God in all things. May the Holy Spirit open the eyes of my understanding, lead me and guide me aright; for left to my own heart I would go astray. Enable me to cast my care and burden on Jesus, who can save me.

"January 3rd. Sabbath morning. Very much tormented with awful thoughts which I shudder at. I have a fearful heart that would dictate to the Creator of the universe. Very much tormented by Satan, who fills my tongue and imagination with curses and blasphemies. May God for Jesus' sake, on whom I would rely, disappoint him.

"Went to church, my thoughts wandering, and very wicked thoughts rising up. Heard a discourse from Ps. xix. Set my secret faults before my face. Mr. Millar spoke well on presumptuous sin. Alas! how many have I committed even since the Spirit awakened me. It is of mercy I am not cast off. Truly God is long-suffering.

"Prayer meeting in the afternoon. Thoughts away, but rather better staid than in the forenoon.

"Evening. Mr. Hill on Psalm xvii. The poor commit their way to God. Very good discourse. I would commit my way, guilty, weak, and unworthy as I am, to God through Jesus. O guide me, and give me grace to support me under every trial. Give me thy Spirit. Impart thy love, dear Lord Jesus, to my heart.

"January 4th. When I awoke, my mind confused, my imagination going after every evil. Truly the thoughts of

the heart are only evil, and that continually. My mind throughout the day was a chaos of evil and good. How terribly fallen I am, for my mind is enmity against God. Awful thoughts were in my heart against Him. A great conflict going on in my mind, and I am unable in myself to submit my will to God. Oh that He would in mercy give me a humble heart, to see and acknowledge Him in all my ways, and to submit my will to his! I find it a very difficult matter to subdue self, my mind even taking pleasure in confessions. Give me, O Lord, the heart to ascribe glory, honour, and praise to Thee; for I have a heart that would say or think every evil. I would, guilty as I am, put my trust in Jesus. May his love shine into my heart, that I may be humbled and have true sorrow for sin.

"A few moments this evening of awful interest. Satan or my own heart is always putting much to my prayers, thus dictating to God. What a heart! how rebellious! Teach me humility, O Lord. Give me a meek and lowly heart.

"January 5th. Confused thoughts, wicked in the extreme. Yet self-sufficiency. I cannot check my wicked thoughts, and my heart is very unwilling to acknowledge God. No human reason, no learning on earth can give me peace. Alas, my wisdom is a stumbling-block to me; my thoughts are so wicked, that at times they overwhelm me. Trying to trust all in Jesus, but I see it must be a divine faith, for a human faith can give no peace. Went to prayer-meeting, but found no good; yet resolved to follow on to know God. O Lord, give me thy Holy Spirit to reveal thy dear Son to my soul. Give me a humble, broken heart.

"O may thy Spirit seal my soul,
And mould me to thy will,
That my weak heart no more may stray,
But keep thy precepts still.'

"30th. The worst day I have ever had with the suggestions of Satan. Yet God has saved me. I need to be humbled at the foot of the cross. I have resolved in the strength of Jesus to be his. . . . Eternal life is worth struggling for. Lord, make me thine; bend my proud heart by thy Holy Spirit.

"31st. Sabbath. Thoughts mixed—good and evil. . . . Temptations and suggestions of Satan. Heard a sermon

on the joys of heaven; was benefited, and quickened to go forward. Temptations are my grievous lot, but what are they all compared with the joys laid up for those that are tried and faithful?

"February 4th. Seeing more and more of my heart every day. Oh that I had faith to lean on Jesus!

"7th. Went to church; but oh, what corruption—what sin! How many idle thoughts. Nothing but sin in my heart. Meditation on the words of Jesus, 'Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.' This should strip us of all self-righteousness. O Lord, give me a heart to love Thee above all earthly things."

Thus far the journal of the conflict. During this dreary period Duncan Matheson was learning the most difficult of lessons—"the just shall live by faith." Mark the goodness of God. He was refreshed at the well before he began to ascend the Hill Difficulty. Ere he entered that dark Valley of Humiliation and engaged in fierce conflict with Apollyon, he was girded with truth and clad in mail. In his worst times he could remember the Lord from "the land of Jordan and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar;" the memory of his three happy, triumphant days, sustained him, and although deep was calling unto deep, he could still hope in God. Sometimes, indeed, the tried saint is kept from utter apostasy and atheism by the memory of a sweet experience on the Mount of Communion.

As yet it was only the dawn of grace. Night was passing and the day was coming in, though slowly and with clouds. In rude but majestic outline, invisible things were coming to view. He sees God; God is real. He is dealing with God, but God in his holiness rather than God in his love. He sees Jesus; but it is not so much Jesus revealed in the glass of the Word that he sees, as the image of Jesus faintly reflected on the troubled waters of his own heart. The Holy Ghost is real; but he marks his own grieving of the Spirit, rather than the Spirit's graciousness to him. Satan has become real, near, and terrible; but he is not yet seen as vanquished in the cross. Sin in its guilt and power is now to him a gigantic Upas, on whose branch his harp is hanging, and under whose shadow he seems doomed to sit, and weep, and die. Mark how the valiant struggler divides

his charges between the devil and his own heart, giving to each a fair portion of the blame. He who knows sin knows also the devil ; fools, knowing neither, make a mock of both. When a man is passing through this stage of religious experience, an awful, eternal importance attaches to the minutest element of his existence. He weighs his thoughts in a balance. He measures his feelings, affections, and motives by the broad standard of divine perfection. His words are not mere empty sounds, but winged messengers going before to judgment ; and all his steps leave their impress on conscience one by one.

Those two years were spent on the hardest bench in Christ's school. That lowly seat of spiritual discipline has been occupied in turns by all the most distinguished servants of God. During the years preceding his conversion, he had been taught the mad and desperate opposition of the natural man to the grace of God. Now he learned how the flesh lusts against the Spirit ; how legalism counterworks grace in the believer's heart ; how it fetters the liberty, mars the joy, hinders the progress, disfigures the character, and lessens or even destroys the usefulness of the Christian. To one who was to teach multitudes the true way, all that painful experience was of prime importance. His mistakes should save many from similar errors ; his miseries should diminish the misery of others. Our bitterest trials are our best lessons. Joseph studied statesmanship in prison. Moses found a Divinity Hall in the back side of the desert. Forty years in the wilderness made Joshua one of God's greatest soldiers, one of his bravest heroes. Saul's persecution did more to make David the king he was than Samuel's sacred oil. Elijah learned the gospel in its "still small voice" in a cave. Jonah graduated in the whale's belly. Peter got his best lesson in evangelistic theology when he went out in the dark night to weep bitterly for his great sin. Paul was not conferring with flesh and blood during the time spent in Arabia. John went to the highest class in Patmos. The long agony of Luther has lessened the sorrows of millions. John Bunyan called more pilgrims into the King's highway from his dungeon than ever he did from his pulpit. And so of thousands more.

To the Christian and the preacher of Christ, a thorough knowledge of sin is of the highest importance. This know-

ledge, bitter but wholesome, Duncan Matheson was now learning. "I have found original sin in the Bible," said a student to Haldane. "Well," replied the latter: "but have you found it in your own heart?" Few know what it is to see all the terrible hell of man's depraved nature. To be let down into that abyss with the candle of the Lord in your hand, to see its bottomless depths of pride and passion, its tumultuous risings against law and holiness, its desperate rage against God, its Satanic challenges of the Divine Sovereignty, its insane atheisms, its blasphemous horrors, its cloud-covered delusions, its ambushed hosts of armed iniquities, and its infinite capability of engendering evils enough to waste the fairest world of God, and people many hells,—to see all this and far more than words can convey, is not merely to learn the *doctrine*, but to know *the reality of sin*, so that the sense and memory of its nature, criminality, power, and destiny, are branded as with a red-hot iron upon the soul for ever. This knowledge is beyond the ken of short-sighted professors and stone-blind hypocrites.

When such an one, like Luther, goes about for weary months or years bemoaning himself and crying piteously, "Oh, my sin! my sin!" shallow Christians and evil-doers ask, "What great crime has he committed? Surely he is living in gross sin." All the while the man is living a holy life, waging war against the very thought and possibility of evil; but "a sword is in his bones," and his "soul dwells among lions."

The young convert was pursuing holiness as a man runs for his life, but he was partly in error. "I can see," he says, "looking back on that period of my history, where exactly I stood. I had begun in the Spirit, and I wanted to be made perfect in the flesh. My spirit was most legal; I prayed continually, and if I lost a moment I tried to make it up as a man pays a debt. I had a scrupulous conscience, which brought me great torment. My eyes were fixed within myself, and my comfort was drawn from my frames. The Spirit's work in me was the ground of my peace and hope, rather than the work of Christ in our room. I did not see Jesus as my sanctification as well as my justification. I did not then know the meaning of this word as describing the secret of progressive holiness: 'We all, with open

face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.' Although I drew comfort from the person and work of Jesus, I did not live on Him. I was continually analysing my feelings, drawing comfort from what I thought was divine, and rejecting what was natural. Hence my hope rose and fell like a barometer. I remember one day going out to the Castle Park, expecting I should audibly hear a voice from heaven assuring me that all my sins were forgiven. When in this attitude, the word came with power to my heart, 'Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.' Indescribable pangs tore my heart at that moment, and I almost felt I had rather be lost than go on in the way of believing. Immediately another passage of Scripture took forcible hold of me: 'See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh: for if they escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven.'" (Heb. xii. 25.)

From Huntly he went to Edinburgh, and wandered from church to church saying, "Saw ye Him whom my soul loveth?"—"They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." In vain his search. Back again to Huntly he took his way for the purpose of celebrating the Lord's Supper, and showing forth the death of Jesus; but no relief came. "Never did criminal stand on the scaffold with more rueful countenance," he says, "than mine was as I sat at the Lord's table that day." He trembled lest his "blood should be mingled with his sacrifice." This "service was the service of the slave, not of the free." By and by, however, he came to know that justification realised is the great vantage ground in striving after personal holiness, and that a happy consciousness of acceptance in the Beloved is the great incentive to true obedience. He who joys in God his Saviour cannot fight against his divine Friend. The blood of Jesus brings purity in bringing peace. Grasping pardon you grasp holiness. He who receives Jesus receives his Spirit. Love springs from faith; and he who realises most assuredly his standing in grace, walks most steadily in fellowship, works most cheerfully in obedience, and lives most freely in the liberties of holy joy.

This lesson Matheson now learned. The two years' tempest shook the tree, but did not uproot it. If the storm damaged the branches it strengthened the roots. The young Christian unlearned frames and learned faith. He learned to lean on the word of God, the bare word, and nothing but the word. He was taught to trust not in the Christ of his heart, but Christ in the Word. He was taught to "be strong" not in the grace in himself, but "in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." At length realising that God was his salvation through his oneness with Jesus he could say :

"So nigh, so very nigh to God,
More near I cannot be ;
For in the person of his Son
I am as near as He.
So dear, so very dear to God,
More dear I cannot be :
The love wherewith He loves his Son,
Such is his love to me."

Having been brought clearly to see the standing of the believer in Christ, he quickly attained a well-grounded assurance of salvation. He had given diligence to make his calling and election sure ; but he had sought assurance in vain because he had sought it mainly by searching himself. This priceless jewel he found where all good is to be found, at the foot of the cross. Henceforth, although he did not cease to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling, he could always say, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." This happy confidence in the Lord fitted him for the work of an evangelist, and sustained him amidst many labours and trials. The joy of the Lord was his strength, and true of him were these lines :

"There are in this loud and stunning tide
Of human care and crime,
With whom the melodies abide
Of the everlasting chime ;
Who carry music in their heart
Through dusky lane and wrangling mart,
Plying their daily task with busier feet,
Because their secret souls a holy strain repeat."

During this period, in his insatiable hunger for the truth.

he read incessantly, and devoured large and substantial meals of the good old Puritanic theology. Owen, Baxter, Howe, and the other divines of that age were his delight. Thus he laid in a good store for days to come, and treasured much precious seed to be afterwards scattered broadcast over Scotland. In the course of his reading, he stumbled on the writings of Huntington, and for a season was led away into the dreary wilderness of hyper-Calvinism, where some poor souls seem doomed to wander all their days, perhaps as a punishment for their hair-splitting or their spiritual pride. For a time he was bound in the strait jacket of this form of fatalism. He dared not speak to every one of the love of God, lest he should give encouragement to one who was not elect. After a while he discovered his error, and was led to see that to close the door of the universal call of the gospel is to close the door of salvation against the elect themselves, since the only warrant to believe is simply the general invitations addressed to sinners of mankind. He noticed that these ultra-Calvinists are generally unpractical, and much given to preaching in their prayers. When one of this class was leading the devotion by an elaborate theological discussion, some one, as Mathe-son used to tell, probably enough himself, touched the sleeve of the pious theorist, saying, "Ask something from Him." With brusque, quaint irony he was wont to say, "Ah! I see you have taken the divine sovereignty under your special patronage and care, but I have no time for chopping logic with you; I want to win souls."

The insight he obtained into the subtle workings of the human heart during his long conflict prepared him for the work of an evangelist. He could discover at a glance the whereabouts of an enquirer. He was taught to distinguish between mere blind alarm and genuine conviction. If the enquirer was seeking more conviction, instead of seeking Christ, he could point out the error in a word. Pride, pretence, legalism, fear of man, and unbelief in its varied forms, he could clearly expose, and so remove stumbling-blocks out of the way. To the despairing he could say, "I was once where you are now;" and from his own experience he could speak wisely and lovingly to those deeply afflicted ones who think they have sinned the unpardonable sin.

During this period of discipline he learned to pray without ceasing. In company, on the street, in the railway train, in the bustle of business, amidst the solemn fervours of his preaching, and in the very torrent of his own quaint, racy, picturesque talk in social life—in short, everywhere and in all things, his faith went up to heaven in quick, pointed, battle-like cries. When others were preaching we have often heard him praying thus, “Help, Lord, help! Give the blessing, and save many!”

Such, then, were some of the lessons taught him by the Holy Spirit during those two hard and bitter years. A thorough knowledge of sin, of the workings of the human heart, and of the devices of the devil; a clear view of the ground of the believer's standing before God, victory over his adversaries, assurance of salvation, and the habit of praying always,—these were precious fruits in his own experience, and through his work as an evangelist seeds of blessing to others, which he scattered far and wide.

CHAPTER IV.

HIS EVANGELISTIC APPRENTICESHIP.

“Son, go work to-day in my vineyard.”—*Matt. xxi. 28.*

“HY stand ye here all the day idle?” This question could not have been appropriately addressed to Duncan Matheson at any period of his Christian life. Immediately on his conversion he began to labour for the salvation of souls. At first his light was small; but he kept trimming his lamp both for his own and others' good, and the flame increased. Every effort of faith and sacrifice of love seemed to add live coals to his altar of fire. For twenty years the flame of zeal was never suffered to expire; no, not for a single day. Night and day, in season and out of season, he strove with all his might to win souls.

His first attempt was at Burntisland, where the minister of the Free Church kindly gave him the use of the school, and otherwise encouraged him. He began by wisely con-

joining the temporal with the spiritual, making the former subservient to the latter. Having acquired proficiency in drawing, he offered gratuitously to teach his fellow-workmen. The class was opened and closed with prayer and reading of the Word. His interest in the temporal well-being of the workmen was genuine; but he cared chiefly for their souls. While they were learning to draw sketches, he was striving to save sinners; while they studied architectural plans, he was brooding over plans for their salvation. Here he reaped one of the less pleasant fruits of doing good. One of the class obtaining the use of Matheson's drawing instruments, disappeared with the ill-gotten spoil, and the benevolent teacher was left at a great loss. He was vexed, but nothing daunted. Throughout his life he invariably set himself to promote in every possible way the earthly welfare of his fellow-men; and this he did not merely as a means to the highest end, the saving of souls, but because it was his duty and his joy. Frequently, when he had spent all his earnings in charity, did he go about and solicit aid for the poor. Sometimes he was known to go amongst the neighbours and beg a scuttle-full of coals, carry them to the cheerless home of the destitute sick, with his own hands make a fire, and then prepare "the cup that cheers, but not inebriates," procured at the expense of his own last shilling. Only after the poor, forlorn, bed-ridden, solitary one was refreshed did he take his Bible from his pocket to read, and pray, and speak of Jesus and salvation. "I never believed," he says, "in speaking sweet words and honied counsels to starving people. If you want to do them good, go to them with a loaf in one hand and the Bible in the other. Actions speak louder than words."

About this time he succeeded in preventing a strike. His sympathy with the men, his manly frankness, his judicious counsel and weight of character, were, by the blessing of God sought for in prayer, entirely successful. He felt he obtained his reward in the evils thus averted and in the harmony restored between masters and men. He found the gospel to be the true remedy of every woe. Jesus is indeed Jehovah-rophi.

Returning to Huntly, he began with all his energy and enthusiasm to make known the Saviour he had found.

Every hour was spent in visiting the sick and distributing tracts. His efforts were not confined to his native town. Everywhere in the neighbouring parishes he sought his way with more or less success. Hitherto he had confined his evangelistic services to prayer, reading the word, and conversation; but the time had arrived when he must take a step in advance. One day Miss Macpherson, a devoted Christian, who had been his friend, counsellor, and good angel throughout the period of his protracted spiritual conflict, requested him to address a company of aged women whom she had gathered together. Matheson declined the invitation. He "could not preach." Miss M. reasoned, urged, and entreated; but all in vain. Finally, demanding what he would answer at the great tribunal for a neglected talent, she charged him not to refuse lest souls should perish in consequence. This was more than he could bear. He went to the meeting, though with the greatest hesitancy and fear. Opening the Bible at Isaiah xxxii. 11, "Tremble, ye women that are at ease; be troubled, ye careless ones," he spoke with great freedom and power. Both the text and matter of his address seemed to be laid to his hand; and such were the results that he felt assured the Lord was calling him to this work. The Christian lady, who by her wisdom and faithfulness was instrumental in calling into exercise a gift of inestimable value, little knew at that time the greatness of the service she was rendering to the Church and the world.

From this time onwards to the end of his days he found at once his greatest labour and his chief joy in preaching Christ. In a short space of time he established a great many cottage meetings, which he carried on with uncommon vigour and success. Solemn events occurred. One night our evangelist addressed a meeting on the parable of the ten virgins. A woman, deeply impressed, went home, and spent a night of sleepless anxiety. Early in the morning she called her neighbour to go and fetch Duncan Matheson. As the messenger left the house a great crash was heard: the anxious enquirer had dropped dead. "While they went to buy, the Bridegroom came."

A man, in whose house Matheson held a meeting, taking offence at the word, informed the evangelist that the next

meeting would be the last under his roof. The young servant of Christ was deeply grieved, and prayed much for an appropriate subject of final address. One text took hold of his mind, and he could not get rid of it. Accordingly he preached on the solemn and touching words of the Lord Jesus: "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." At the close the evangelist shook hands with the master of the house, and said, "Prepare to meet thy God." The ark of the Lord was thrust out, and the ark-bearer with it. Next day the man, when drinking with his companions in the public-house, suddenly fell dead. These providential visitations served to deepen the impression made by the word. Great power accompanied the preaching, the people were seen running home from the place of meeting in a state of great alarm.

The Duchess of Gordon, hearing of young Matheson's zealous and successful labours, sent for him and offered to employ him as missionary at a salary of forty pounds a year. Hitherto he had maintained himself; but his means were now exhausted. His worldly prospects were indeed bright. His skill as a builder, his energy, enterprising spirit, business talents, and moral integrity, held out the promise of position and wealth; but he cheerfully turned his back on honour and gain, and betook himself amidst opposition and scorn to build the walls of Jerusalem. Being now fully possessed by the great passion of his life, the saving of souls, worldly considerations were with him of small account. The offer of the Duchess was accepted. He went to work with all his might. Although he never received more than the small salary named, he spent a large proportion of it in the purchase of tracts, and in the relief of the poor; and this noble and generous practice he followed whilst he lived.

His strength was great, and he often worked sixteen hours a day. Sinners were converted, and he was filled with joy. Often, however, no success attended his labours; but although cast down and led to humble himself at the sight of souls perishing in their wilful rejection of Christ, he learned many a useful lesson. Some men, he observed, concealed a hard heart beneath "a thick coat of evangelical varnish." They assented to all he said, but repented not.

He watched them at the last hour of life, and saw them die without giving one sign of grace. There were no bands in their death; their strength was firm. He concluded that there is no more dangerous delusion than the confidence begotten by a mere "head knowledge," or intellectual faith.

He frequently visited the old Christians who had been disciples of Mr. Cowie, and in his intercourse with them learned several useful lessons. One of these pilgrims was Isobel Chrystie, then upwards of ninety years of age. "Come awa, my son David," said Isobel to the missionary one day as he entered her humble cot. "Perhaps," was his reply, "the hands are the hands of Esau, but the voice is Jacob's. How do you know that I am not a hypocrite?" "Ah," said she, "d'ye think I dinna ken the breath o' a true Christian?" The Rose of Sharon may lie hid in the believer's bosom, but its fragrance cannot be concealed from others. "We ocht to lay down our lives for the brithren; an' hoo could we dee for them if we dinna ken them?" So thought Isobel Chrystie. When in the course of conversation allusion was made to the salvation of the dying thief, she rattled her little staff on the floor and said, "That was a gey trophy to gang throw the gowden gates o' heaven. I'm thinkin' there was a gey steer amo' the angels; but nane o' them would try to pit him oot. Na, na; Christ brocht him ben." When Isobel lay dying she was unable to recognise minister, missionary, friend, or neighbour. To each enquiry she still replied, "I dinna ken you." At last the question was put to her, "Isobel, d'ye ken Christ?" The countenance of the dying saint brightened at the sound of her Saviour's name. Looking up with a smile she promptly replied, "That I do, but nae sae muckle as I would like, and will do by an' by." That night the aged believer went to be with Him whom she remembered and knew when all others were forgotten and unknown.

A dying saint of the same generation gave him this pithy advice: "Haud in wi' Christ; whatever happens, aye think weel o' God; and tak' care o' yersel'; for, ye ken, a breath dims a polished shaft."

Another Christian, ere passing away, charged him to warn the believers against "razing the foundations." "I often did it," she said; "I rashly denied the Spirit's work in my

soul, and I have paid dearly for it." This she said in reference to the excessive and morbid retrospection in which some Christians indulge, to the hurt of their souls and the discredit of the gospel. They pull up faith by the roots to see if it is growing. They pluck out their eyes to see if those eyes are genuine. Peace and joy depart from them. Dark suspicions of God, as if He watched for their halting, overshadow their hearts, and they are plunged into misery. Growth in grace becomes impossible; for, as one has said, "kindly thoughts of God lie at the root of sanctification." Self-examination is important; but surely not less important is faith. Looking into the heart and looking out to Christ should go together. The pilot at once keeps his eye upon the compass and his hand upon the helm: if he neglected either he would speedily lose his course. "Keeping the heart" must be coupled with "holding the Head." "Examine thyself" should never be separated from "looking unto Jesus." The best way of testing the pitcher of our faith is by dipping it often in the Well of Life and drawing its fill for constant use.

In the journal of his missionary labours he kept a minutely detailed account of every visit and conversation, and his impressions of the people. This record, large enough to fill a volume, was written with perfect accuracy and fastidious care, and serves to illustrate the *thoroughness* that always characterised the man and his work. Plainly too it appears from this diary that in simplicity and godly sincerity did he bring before every man, woman, and child, the things of their peace. As usual, he found two classes, viz., the few that are open to conviction, and the many that entrench themselves behind their own righteousness. One refuses to make any sign in regard to personal religion, and he is silenced by silence. The candle will not burn for want of air. Another agrees with everything the missionary says, and in that panoply of perfect formalism no joint is found. The candle burns, but it is in the presence of the dead. A third "will not speak of his religion to any man, because it is a matter between himself and God;" to which the missionary bluntly replies that if he had true religion it would make him speak, for he would seek communion with men of like mind, and out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

Some men conceal their religion as they would a scab. Eloquent about the merest trifle, they have nothing to say for Christ. These are the devil's dummies. Another, a middle-aged matron, receives him kindly, but is at first shy and reserved. His quaint, ingenuous, spirit-stirring talk quickly unlocks the good woman's heart, and she begins to tell him that she "fears she is mair o' a hypocrite than a Christian, for she canna see hoo a child o' God could hae sae muckle indwallin' sin as she has : but still she daurna deny that she canna do without prayer, that she has a gey likin' to God's Word, an' a warm hert to God's children, and a terrible fear o' sin, though she is somehoo aye sinnin' an' sinnin' for a that." The missionary takes up the case, and by the help of his own experience so sets forth the truth of the gospel, that the enquirer enters into light, freedom, and joy ; and ever afterwards he is to her as an angel of God, and she is to him, "a daughter of the King."

Sometimes he held as many as seventy prayer-meetings in three months. In his reports he complains of scanty fruit in the fewness of conversions. At one time he feels nothing but "formalism" and "leanness of soul" in discussing solemn truths. Again, he goes to the meeting in great fear, and finds the stone rolled away from the mouth of the sepulchre ; instead of "darkness, guilt, confusion arising from self-sufficiency," he enjoys enlargement and blessing. "I have seen impressions made, yet soon after I have seen the last trace of them effaced. I have been helped to set a gracious soul a step up the ladder, yet on going back I have found them ten steps down. What I have longed, and prayed, and sought for has been conversion unto God, and any hope or comfort I have had in seeking this has arisen from this very truth, that He works as seemeth good in his sight, and calleth whom He will."

Not satisfied with the efforts of his voice, he devised means for the circulation of tracts on the widest scale. Means failing him, for he had spent his last penny in the work, he began to cry to God for aid. One night in prayer, the thought came into his mind, "If I could get a printing press I could make as many tracts as I could use." On this he began to pray for a printing press, and for several months continued to supplicate this gift from his God. The prayer was unex-

pectedly answered. Accidentally discovering that an old printing press was for sale, he made inquiries as to the terms, although he did not possess the means of purchase. Much to his astonishment, the person whose property it was let him have it, with a set of old worn types, at a merely nominal price. Never did warrior bear away the trophies of victory with deeper joy than he felt in carrying the old printing machinery to his father's house. On reaching home, he wrote upon it,

FOR GOD AND ETERNITY;

and then, hastening to his closet, "fell upon his knees, and asked the needed skill to work it." Nothing daunted by his ignorance of printing, he set himself to learn "the divine art," his only instructors the two great teachers of all heroic souls and successful workers, to wit, Failure and Perseverance. Apprentice and master, printer and publisher, missionary and philanthropist, all in one, he ascended by the slow and painful steps of experience struck out of repeated failure, like fire flashing from the smitten eye of him who runneth in the dark, till at length he reached the summit of his fondest wish, and unaided could send forth thousands of tracts like leaves from the tree of life.

His first attempts at printing ended in failure and chagrin. Whole nights were spent in ineffectual efforts; but never despairing, he cried to God for help, and went to work again. Often for hours the work of "composing" goes on, till at length his eye rests with complacency on a page of type, when suddenly the whole falls down into what printers call "pie," and his mortification is complete. Falling again upon his knees, he prays for patience and help. The sight of his own inscription, "For God and Eternity," inspires him with fresh zeal, and although oftentimes "the lumbering press goes all wrong," he perseveres till at length success comes to him, as Jesus came to the disciples upon the sea at the latest watch of the night. "I went on," he says, "till I managed to print two thousand four-page tracts a day. How I did toil, and sweat, and pray at it! Some nights I never slept at all, but went on composing. My constitution was strong, and night after night was spent at the work."

The tracts brought him no money, and his own slender means were speedily exhausted. His benevolent labours

excited little sympathy in his native town ; the only contribution to his tract enterprise he ever received in Huntly was half-a-crown, brought him by a poor widow. Falling short of paper and money, what was he to do? Give up the unprofitable business, and leave an ungrateful people to themselves? Never. Not in that way are souls won for Christ, and the glory of God advanced. Again he betook himself to prayer, and the same gracious Master who provided the printing press provided the paper also. Certain Christians in Lincolnshire, whom he had never seen, fell in with one of his tracts, and pleased with its spirit and contents wrote for a supply. He could not supply them for want of paper. This led to further correspondence, and the supply of means to procure paper from time to time.

One tract, entitled "The Lord's Supper Profaned," called forth not a little opposition. After printing it, he went round and with his own hand left a copy in every house in his native town. For the professors who have but a name to live it was too searching ; hence it gave deadly offence. It was blessed of God, however, in the conversion of several persons, and is still in circulation in the Stirling Series of tracts. Mr. Drummond, who has done so noble a work of the same kind, re-issued the faithful tract, and several others also of Mr. Matheson's. Another tract, entitled "The Origin of the Chinese Bible Fund," intended to further the circulation of the Scriptures in China, found its way into the Royal Palace, and thus afforded an illustration of Solomon's saying, "Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings ; he shall not stand before mean men."

In addition to original matter, our evangelist took extracts from Boston, Edwards, Flavel, and other favourite authors, and went on printing, till at length in an incredibly short space of time he had by his own unaided efforts thrown off and put into circulation a hundred thousand little gospel messengers, the voice of whose quiet but powerful testimony cannot have been in vain. He was now sowing what many years afterwards he was destined to reap.

That young man, with his immense capacities for earthly promotion and enjoyment, turning his back on all the ambitions and pleasures of the world, and after a long day

of sorest toil, spending the silent watches of night in so great a labour of disinterested love, was surely a pleasing sight to the angels of God. Toil, privation, ingratitude, opposition, scorn, disappointment and failure, neither weakened his hands nor discouraged his heart. He endured as seeing Him who is invisible; and bravely did he march forward in his lofty mission of self-sacrificing love to souls, ever affording practical illustration of his own motto, "For God and Eternity."

Feeling that his work would soon be done in Huntly, he laboured night and day to win souls; and ere he left his native place for other fields, he could say in truth he had warned every sinner and testified the grace of God to every soul. Of all the rare privileges enjoyed by Huntly during a day of merciful visitation extending over the last thirty years, not the least has been the faithful testimony and apostolic labours of her own brave and much-enduring son Duncan Matheson, whose name will be an honour to his native town whilst Christianity lives within her borders, and whose example of untiring energy, heroic perseverance, and Christ-like love of souls will stir the hearts of the ingenuous youth in future generations, and kindle noble aspirations in the bosoms of many yet unborn.

At this time the perishing millions of China lay heavy on his heart, and he longed to go forth and preach the gospel in the land of Sinim. Much did he "sigh and cry" about the heathen, and often did he say in his inmost heart, "Lord, here am I; send me." During the last months he spent in Huntly, as he went from house to house pleading with men to receive Christ, the words of Heber's hymn were constantly sounding in his ear:

"Shall we, whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high,
Shall we to men benighted
The lamp of life deny?
Salvation, O salvation,
The glorious sound proclaim,
Till earth's remotest nation
Hath learnt Messiah's name!"

CHAPTER V.

HIS MISSION TO THE CRIMEA.

"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I : send me."— *Isa.* vi. 8



IS evangelistic apprenticeship was now at a close. He had obtained "a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." Even if he had accomplished little he had learned much. By constant and prayerful study of the scriptures and the best divines, he had greatly increased his intellectual and spiritual stores. His mind was braced by severe discipline, his judgment matured by deep reflection, and his gift of utterance developed by exercise. His knowledge of the truth kept pace with his growing insight into human nature ; and the frequent rebuffs he met taught him to add tact to straightforwardness in dealing with men. His faith, like his person, was sturdy, stalwart, and full of robust health ; his assurance was as clear and calm as a summer morning ; and his consecration to God was entire. In his consuming zeal for the salvation of men he was willing to go anywhere or do anything at the Master's call. Born a soldier, every inch of him a man of war, he was not the less fitted for camps and the rougher scenes of life, now that he stood clad in the whole armour of God, "a good soldier of Jesus Christ." The man of prayers, and tears, and love to souls, had his humble part to play in the gathering of the armies of the nations ; and though that part nobly performed finds no place in the annals of the Crimean struggle, the record of the missionary's campaign is on high, and its results, when disclosed in the last great assembly of the human race, will doubtless receive a nobler reward than the perishing laurels of earthly fame.

Our evangelist happening to witness the departure of soldiers for the Crimea in 1854 was deeply moved by the

sad farewells. This changed the current of his thoughts and sympathies; and although he did not cease to pray for the perishing millions of China, his heart went with the soldiers, and he began to lay the matter before the Lord. The more he thought of the peculiar circumstances of a soldier's life, its hardships, its snares, its constant risk and peril, its need of counsel and of the cross, the more he prayed and longed to go as a herald of mercy to the camp, the field, and the hospital, in the distant East, to share his joy with the weary, the wounded, and the dying. How this could be brought about he had no idea. His desire was known only to God; but he believed in the Hearer of prayer, and continued to wait at the throne of grace.

The call for which he was praying came from an unexpected quarter, and it came stamped with the broad seal of a special providence. It happened in this way. One day he received a letter, which in substance ran thus: "If you are still in the mind to go to the East, reply by return of post, and please say when you could start." The letter was from the Rev. J. Bonar, convener of the Colonial Committee of the Free Church—a gentleman whom Duncan Matheson had never seen, and did not know. Surely, he thought as he read Mr. Bonar's note, there is some mistake here. Yet he felt as if the hand and voice of God were in it, calling him to the scene of conflict. He went and told the Duchess, saying that there was clearly a mistake, but that he was willing to go. "How strange!" exclaimed her Grace; "I have been praying that God would incline you to go, and others have been praying also. If there is a mistake, I will send you myself." He wrote to Mr. Bonar, and ascertained that the letter was intended for another of the same name, a Gaelic-speaking licentiate of the Free Church, who had been employed for some time among the navvies. The Countess of Effingham, desirous of sending a missionary to the Highland Brigade, had requested Mr. Bonar to find a suitable agent for the work. Mr. Bonar wrote to the Rev. D. Matheson; but the letter going astray, a clerk in the Post-office had written on it, "Try Huntly," and so it came into the hands of the wrong D. Matheson, according to the proposing of man, but the right D. Matheson, according to the disposing of God.

Mr. Bonar, glad to find a fit man ready to undertake so arduous a mission, requested him to come up to Edinburgh and arrange for taking his departure for the East, in connection with the British and Foreign Soldiers' Friend Society. He whose "kingdom ruleth over all," and who "holdeth the seven stars in his right hand," overruled the mistake of the Post-office for the accomplishment of a great purpose.

With characteristic decision he went up to Edinburgh the day after he received Mr. Bonar's letter, and without an hour's delay, entered into engagements with the Society to go to the East as a Scripture-reader. At the same time he received a commission from the Free Church Colonial Committee, and a recommendation "to their brethren at Constantinople or other places where Providence may cast his lot."

The following scrap was found in his room after his departure: "I surrender father, sister, brothers, myself,—all, all that concerns me, into thy hands, O my God. For the past, I bless Thee. For the present, I praise Thee. For the future, I trust Thee. My feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Nights end. Partings close. I am thine, O Lord, wholly thine.—Nov. 8th, 1854." This was counting the cost.

At the quiet rectory at Beckenham, a green spot to him ever after, he was received with unbounded kindness; and the parting blessing of the venerable servant of Christ, Dr. Marsh, was fresh on his heart to his dying day. In contrast to this was the discouraging language of certain ministers of the gospel, who, meeting him at another stage of his journey, warned him against speaking to the soldiers about *conversion*. "You will be expelled from the camp, if you do," said they. He replied, that he was going to the Crimea for the very purpose of telling the unconverted soldiers that they needed to be born again, and by the grace of God he would do it, be the consequences what they might. In this way he experienced light and shade.

TO HIS SISTER.

"London, 11th November, 1854.

"I have met with kindness such as I never felt on earth, and have met with some of the Lord's dear family in the highest ranks of life. Surely goodness and mercy follow

me. I feel it—I know it. My heart is stayed on the Lord ; it is truly humbling and cheering. Letters come daily from persons I have never seen. My destination is in the meantime Scutari. My whole energies will be devoted to my dear countrymen. . . . I long to get to my work. I feel no shrinking. I commit my way to the Lord. I go his errand. I seek his glory ; it is enough. Do seek to rejoice that He counts me worthy to go. I am calmly resting on his arm. I feel no fears. Truly I am not alone. He bears me up. Clouds, trials, darkness may come ; yet all works for good. Dear father and sister, be of good courage, for I am for ever the Lord's."

"London, 15th November, 1854.

"I long for my work. I see the need great and pressing. I seek no rest till I get it on high. I know to his own God will be a Shepherd, gently leading and guiding them. Never did I feel so much as now the power, the deep sustaining power of grace. Ah, dear sister, it is sweet to be passive in the Lord's hand ; to know his grace, to enjoy his smile. I offer myself to the Lord. I may meet rough tossing, billows heaving, seas swelling ; yet the throne, the crown, the kingdom on high—that is our goal—that is enough for me."

"Off Cape St. Vincent, 22nd November, 1854.

"MY DEAR, DEAR JESSIE,—How I shall write you just now I know not, the motion of the steamer is so great. Still I am anxious to send you a few lines as we expect to be in Gibraltar to-morrow. . . . It seems as if the Lord were giving me such displays of his goodness as to compel me to say, 'This God is my God for ever and ever ; He will be my guide even unto death.' On getting aboard the steamer, I saw my luggage safely put away, and was then conducted to my berth by the steward. I knelt down in it, and committed myself, you, father, friends, and all on board to the Lord. Felt deeply and calmly reposed. And here I mark his hand—I got a cabin to myself, whilst the other passengers were placed two and two together. The scene as we steamed down the Mersey was truly exciting to most ; to me it was not. My thoughts were on my work, home, the need of close walking with God ; all these pressed on

me. I walked the deck alone, yet not alone. I write a note to you. The pilot left us. The wind freshened and we sped onward. Night settled on us, and still I was on deck. Oh, it was strange, passing strange, to me; and most of all to watch the phosphorus light dancing on the crest of every wave far behind. I went below as night stole on, and, committing all to the Lord, fell calmly asleep.

"Sabbath morning dawned, and with it a raging sea, rolling mountains high; each wave as it broke on the vessel's side made her quiver from one end to the other; but the wind was favourable and on we sped. I felt that there was no Sabbath on board. All was bustle and confusion. The light-hearted gaiety of souls without God. I had tracts and Bibles with me; these I went and gave the poor sailors, who had none. Never did I see such gratitude expressed; it saddened my inmost heart. Once and again I have asked to be the means of saving souls in this vessel, and it may be the Lord's will to do it. How solemn a matter to be saved! How deeply momentous the issues that hang on *not being saved*. Not saved, though the Bible is read; the Spirit strives; sermons are preached; providences are sent—solemn thought! Shutting myself in my cabin, I hope I had something of the real Sabbath-keeping spirit. Yea, I dare not question it, for I felt borne up and calmly stayed upon the Lord.

"We had one fearful day going through the Bay of Biscay. Most of the passengers were sick. I felt rather qualmish; but kept on deck, for I was anxious to see the ocean in all its fury—and certainly the Bay of Biscay is the place to see this. Now and then as a wave broke on the vessel, the noise resembled thunder, but I felt no fear; for 'He holdeth the sea in the hollow of his hand,' 'His ways are in the sea' was forcibly opened up to me. Who would look for a path in the sea? And yet so strange are his dealings (and to me they have been so) as to look like the opening of a way in the sea.

"My one grand desire is to go and tell of Christ and Him crucified, looking for the descent of the Holy Ghost to own the word for the conversion of souls. I am compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses. The eye of Israel's Shepherd is upon me. Months, years, glide on; eternity seems at hand. For a while, earth has been losing much of its

attractions for me ; and heaven with its undimmed purity, its endless pleasures, its streams of bliss, its unwithering crown, and its blessed God, grows sweeter and sweeter."

At Constantinople he was received with much kindness by Messrs. Thomson, Turner, and McKutcheon, of the Free Church Mission to the Jews. Bitter was his disappointment on finding that military law strictly forbade his going to the Crimea, and it only remained for him to return home, as other missionary agents had done. That night was spent in prayer ; towards dawn, as he tells, he felt in his heart as if God had heard his cry, and would open up his way. Next day accompanied by Mr. (now Dr.) Thomson, he applied to Admiral Boxer for permission to go to the scene of strife ; and contrary to all expectation that officer at once granted him his request. Great was his joy and gratitude, and cordially did he praise God for "having touched the Admiral's heart."

Losing no time, he embarked on board a transport conveying soldiers, and quickly found himself steaming up the Bosphorus, and entering the Black Sea. By order of the Admiral, he was entitled to share cabin accommodation with two chaplains ; but when night came these gentlemen, forgetting the law of love, thrust him out. A kind-hearted engineer gave him his berth in the forecastle, but he could not sleep. The conduct of the soldiers and sailors was more than he could endure ; it was like "hell let loose," and he was glad to escape on deck, where "under the starry vault of heaven he spent the night, thinking of heaven and home, praying for needed grace, and feeling assured that the unslumbering eye of Israel's Shepherd would watch over him, and all would be well." At break of day on 5th December they sighted the Crimea, and when they reached Balaklava, the troops were ordered on shore at once, as an attack was expected from the army of Liprandi. "All was mirth and excitement. We could distinctly hear the booming of the cannon, not in mere holiday salute, but in deadly earnest. What a tide of feeling rushed through my mind, as I thought of mothers weeping for their sons, wives for their husbands, and sisters for their brothers, whom they should see no more, and of the brave men fallen in battle, their bodies

buried in the common pit near the field of strife, and their spirits passing from the roar of battle into the immediate presence of God. Turning to my text for the day, I was cheered when I found it was, "The Lord preserveth those that love Him." I felt I was nerved for whatever might befall me ; and stranger though I was,—knowing no one, as a messenger of peace, with a lion heart I stepped on Crimean soil.

"Alma had been fought, and Inkermann won. The thin red line had been formed on the plains of Balaklava, and the grand death-charge had been made. But the very elements had risen in arms against us. It would be impossible to describe the state of the army at this time. The hospitals were crowded ; many were dying. Day after day, ship after ship with its load of suffering was despatched to Scutari. Many of those you met were in rags. Most were emaciated and smitten with hunger. Some were almost shoeless ; many had biscuit-bags instead of trousers, whilst others had newspapers tied round their legs ; and often such was the wretchedness that you could not distinguish officer from man, or recognise the best known."

Matheson, with characteristic generosity, immediately gave away all the clothes he could spare, and then began to distribute his spiritual stores in the shape of tracts and Bibles, of which latter there was a great scarcity in the camp. The books and especially the Bibles were received with the greatest eagerness, and read with wonderful earnestness. Some 25,000 tracts, selected by the Tract Society, by Mr. Drummond, of Stirling, and by Miss Marsh, were quickly put into circulation.

"January 25th, 1855.—How shall I describe the scenes I hourly see. I shrink from it ; they are truly appalling. The condition of our army is sad. Yesterday 600 were brought sick from Sebastopol, and conveyed on board ship. I took my stand in the midst of them, and spoke to them of the only all-sufficient Saviour. Many listened with interest, and at last the gushing tears told a way had been found to the heart. My heart was like to break. Oh, I have often felt since coming here that the one thing needed is the Holy Ghost. All looked haggard and worn. Death is thought nothing of. I had a long conversation with an officer

yesterday. He speaks of the demoralisation of the army as truly awful, and says swearing and ungodliness are increasing. Since I came here I have not gone ten paces without hearing profane swearing. And yet there are hopeful appearances. . . . The taking of Sebastopol is no easy task. There seems as yet no recognition of the Lord's giving the victory. The men are greatly dispirited; yet, strange to say, long for nothing so much as a battle. I can, and do at this moment, hear the roll of the cannon. At every shot my heart leaps, for usually some one is hurried into eternity. O happy people whose God is the Lord. Truly I feel it, and can really say thoughts of heaven are growing sweeter and sweeter every hour. I long for rest, yet am resigned to his will. O how fondly my affections twine around home and friends! Huntly!—I cannot, I will not forget it. I see other scenes; I possess other friends; but the dear saints in Huntly and in Scotland have the largest place. . . . I feel there is nothing I more need than the prayers of all who love the Lord. I cannot tell what I may have to undergo. All is in the Lord's hands. I need a close, calm, and holy walk with Him. One needs to be always ready here, for it is a death-stricken scene. My comfort in my work is, 'He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.' Come, Lord Jesus: come quickly. Amen."

Mr. Matheson was not slow in seeking out men of his own spirit in the army. His first acquaintance was Hector Macpherson, drum-major, 93rd Highlanders, a soldier both of his country and of the cross, of whom our missionary used to tell the following story:—One day a chaplain, newly arrived, called on the sergeant, and asked his advice as to the best method of conducting his work. "Come with me," said Hector, "to the hill-top. Now, look around you. See yonder the pickets of Liprandi's army. See yon batteries on the right, and the men at the guns. Mark yon trains of ammunition. Hear the roar of that cannon. Look where you may, it is all earnest here. There is not a man but feels it is a death struggle. If we don't conquer the Russians, the Russians will conquer us. We are all in earnest, sir; we are not playing at soldiers here. If you would do good *you* must be in earnest too. An earnest

man will always win his way." Such was the advice of Queen Victoria's servant to the servant of Jesus Christ.

Hector and Duncan on the first Sabbath after the arrival of the latter retired to a ravine, and there amid the deafening roar of cannon, which the missionary thought was always worse on the Lord's day, they read, and prayed, and sang together the old battle-song of David and Luther :

"God is our refuge and our strength,
In straits a present aid ;
Therefore, although the earth remove,
We will not be afraid."

Here making intercession for their friends at home, for their country, and for the army, they found a Bethel ; and for a moment almost forgot that they were in the presence of one of the greatest woes of earth. "Thus we had many a pleasant hour together," says our missionary ; "and the only strife we ever had was about the soldiers' scanty meal which we divided between us, each insisting that the other should have the larger share. Our watchword, without which we never met or parted, was 'The Lord reigneth.'"

Mr. H. Macpherson, writing of his friend says, "Our first interview took place on a ridge within the entrenchments of the 93rd Highlanders, which ran along the north side of the plain of Balaklava, opposite the harbour, and about a mile from the village, and which formed the key of the base of the siege operations of the British army. I was standing watching the movements of the Russian forces, who appeared as if designing to threaten our position, when I noticed a stranger in the attire of a civilian approaching, who from his clean white breast and respectable dress, contrasting with our rags, I concluded was a minister or lay-missionary, newly arrived. This supposition led me to resolve on exercising caution as to committing myself to him, feeling that unless he was a man of God, and had thoroughly counted the cost, resolving in dependence on promised grace to throw his whole soul into the work, he would neither gain the attention nor win the heart's affection of British soldiers ; for carrying their life in their hand, they are above every class of men prejudiced against and opposed to mere official piety and ecclesiastical hirelingism. As these thoughts were passing through my mind, the

stranger advanced, and in his own unreservedly frank and manly way introduced himself, saying with real feeling, 'Oh, Hector, man, I am glad to see you. How are you?' Suspicions quickly vanished, and I feel grateful to the Disposer of every event that in the thick of deadly strife on the plain of Balaklava, I first met Duncan Matheson, who became my fond, fast friend for life. The report I had received from a worthy minister of the gospel in Scotland, of Mr. Matheson's character, I found to be in no degree exaggerated, and I reckon it one of my most highly-prized privileges on earth that ever I became acquainted with such a man. Since that day many a happy and profitable hour have I spent in his company; and it has been my rare privilege to be associated with him in evangelistic labours in many towns, villages, and rural parishes of Scotland. I could not fail to respect him for his great ability; I admired his sterling worth; his unwearied, self-denying devotedness in the cause and service of God, his manly frankness and unflinching courage, and his large-hearted sympathy with distress, all tended to endear him to me in the bonds of closest friendship. Never had the British soldier a more true, loving, and devoted friend than Duncan Matheson. I believe there is not a British soldier now alive, who served in the Crimea, but would heartily subscribe to my testimony in his favour; for all, both officers and men, knew, and loved, and respected him. As to the fruit of his labours in the Crimea, the day of God will declare. My own conviction is that he laboured more abundantly, and accomplished more real good among the troops, than all the others, with the exception of the Rev. J. W. Hayward, a noble minister of the Church of England, who devoted his time, his talents, and his fortune, to the promotion of the temporal and spiritual benefit of the soldier. With this zealous and faithful servant of Christ, Mr. Matheson was most intimately associated; they were daily together, and went hand in hand in all labours of love.

"Happening to mention to my friend, just after we made each other's acquaintance, that the first clause of the first verse of the 93rd Psalm had been a comfort to my soul, Mr. Matheson, feeling the power of the truth in his own heart, and realising its appropriateness in the circumstances

in which we were placed, seized it as a watchword ; and ever after, wherever and whenever we met, 'The Lord reigneth' became the pass-word between us.

"Wherever I met my dear friend I was sure to find him, like his Master, going about doing good ; sometimes laden with Bibles, sometimes with tracts and other suitable books, and seldom without some temporal comforts for the sick and wounded. Many of the sick, wounded, and worn-out soldiers, was he the means of relieving, and who, but for his devoted, kind, and sympathising efforts, would have sunk into the cold embrace of death. He was the trusted friend of all, French, Turks, and Italians, as well as his own countrymen. Soldiers of every grade and nationality looked on him as their special friend. How he managed to procure in a time of famine so many comforts for the starving soldiers was a mystery ; but none knew better than he, 'Where there is a will there is a way.' His tact and genial frankness made him a favourite with the captains of the mercantile steamers employed by the Government, some of whom were truly Christian men. By the graphic and touching descriptions of the destitution and sufferings of the soldiers in the entrenchments, backed by his own evident sympathy, he reached the warm hearts of the seamen ; and the never-failing result was a thorough searching of the vessels for everything that could be spared for the benefit of the suffering soldiers.

"Entering the encampment of the 93rd Highlanders one icy cold winter day, he observed our destitution of fuel either to cook our rations or warm our persons. The great majority of us were clothed in rags ; some without shoes ; others without a cap to cover their heads from the pelting of the pitiless storm ; and some of us with more mud than clothing attached to our bodies. After a few words of loving sympathy he said, 'Hector, I must try and help you.' But what could he do in such a case ? Why, next day he returned, and informed me that he had made an effort and succeeded in procuring several tons of coals from the different steamers in the harbour of Balaklava, which were conveyed to the camp as soon as possible. This is one instalment of many noble acts of kindness done to the sufferers in that terrible winter. For the relief of the men

who were exposed not only to the hail of the enemy's fire, but to the fierce blasts of winter, almost without a rag to cover them, he laboured incessantly and unweariedly, until his gigantic efforts broke his constitution down.

"But what he chiefly aimed at was the spiritual and eternal welfare of his fellow-men. The soldiers understood this; and whenever he spoke to them of salvation they listened with respectful attention. They knew he was no mere official hireling, but a man who loved their souls; and not a few through his instrumentality, by God's almighty and distinguishing grace, have been prevented from going down to an unblest eternity. In his love to souls he forgot himself. Often have I had to make a cup of coffee to relieve his fainting frame, after a weary day's tramping through the mud, laden with provisions for the benefit of others whom he deemed in more absolute need than himself. A more unselfish man I never knew. With the exception of the late Rev. W. C. Burns, I never knew one so entirely devoted to the good of others. The amount of mental and physical labour he went through in the Crimea was truly marvellous, and was enough to break down the most robust constitution. However wet or cold, or however violent the storm, he was always on the move, and always with a special and important purpose. On one of the most tempestuous and piercingly cold nights I ever experienced in the Crimea my regiment received orders to move eight or ten miles to the south of our entrenched position, under cover of the darkness of the night, to dislodge a body of the enemy from a threatening position they held under the covert of a high ridge. We were absent till mid-day following. Matheson was informed of this expedition, and such was his sympathy with others, that although, had he chosen to consult his own ease and comfort, he could have secured protection from the inclemency of the weather, he remained exposed in our original position until our return. I shall never forget the joy he manifested when he saw us all safely return without a single casualty, with the exception of some of the men's ears having been bit by the frosty wind.

"Mr. Matheson was well fitted by personal experience, and much owed by God, in encouraging, comforting, and

strengthening the Christian soldier in the Crimea, both officers and men. It was a special evidence of his own living Christianity that he was a sincere lover of all in whose spirit, temper, and deportment he could discover the impress of Christ's image, without distinction as to sect or creed."

For a time he lodged on board ship; afterwards he took up his abode on shore. There he found a wretched lodging in an old stable, of which he took possession with right good cheer, remembering that his Master was born and cradled in as mean a place. It was too well ventilated, for the fierce wind blew in at a hundred crevices in wall and roof, and often as it whistled through the crannies overhead it seemed to mock the shivering missionary. In an unoccupied corner he erected a rude and comfortless bed, on which at the close of each day's overwhelming labour he laid him down to rest, but more frequently to pray than sleep. To increase his discomfort the stable was infested with rats, and not a night passed but whole armies invaded his couch and rendered him sleepless and miserable. But "necessity is the mother of invention;" our missionary, whose wits often began where other people's end, found means of relief. Amongst the stores lying in one end of the stable he discovered an immense quantity of lucifer matches, which the British Commissariat in its wisdom had laid up here. Taking a large supply to his bedside our Scripture-reader drops asleep with a box in one hand and a bundle of matches in the other. By and by, in the silence and under cover of night, the hungry Russian hordes stealthily issue from their entrenchments, and attack the person of the hapless foreigner. The not unexpected sortie awakens the slumbering Scotchman, who instantly fires his rare artillery; and amidst the horrid noise, the phosphorescent blaze, and the sulphureous stench, enough to put the Cossacks to flight, the enemy scamper off in all directions, leaving the missionary, for the present, master of the field.

Yet in this rude dwelling he was contented and thankful; and even feared it was too good to last long. "My room," he says, "is quite a sight. I have paper for glass in the windows; in some of them not even that. My furniture consists of a bed, which also serves for a chair, a Russian

chest of drawers, and the hay for Mr. W——'s cow. A jelly jar, a brown earthen basin, and a Turkish jar are my dishes. I have a sort of lamp for making my coffee. My pocket knife cuts my bread, and it also serves for eating my egg with; a stick serves as a spoon to stir the sugar with; and a bottle serves for a candlestick. I rise early, light my lamp, make my coffee, clean my boots, sweep my room with a few Turkish feathers, and I can tell you I was never happier in my life. I have a perfect palace, and I have decorated the walls with copies of the 'Illustrated London News.' I fear it is too good to last, but it is in the Lord's hand. How contented I feel with all, and how well it is that I learned when young to help myself. I am happy as a king, yea ten thousand-fold more so than one without grace."

From his journals and letters it is not difficult to form some conception of his daily life in the Crimea. Rising early he prepares his breakfast, and seeks refreshment to his spirit in meditation and prayer. Whilst he intercedes for all, the Sardinian army lies upon his heart like a prophet's burden. Having thus renewed his strength, he carefully selects tracts and books for distribution. His next step is to visit the harbour, where his loud, hearty voice wakens the echoes in many a bluff, kind response on board ship. Humour and pathos are keys to open the heart of Jack, and the missionary is master of both. A sick soldier is in the crisis of disease, and he succeeds in procuring some delicacy for the prostrate warrior. Another whom he met the day before suffers from a threatening cough; an old woollen shirt may save the poor fellow's life. Away he goes with his cargo of stores, temporal and spiritual, and trudges through unfathomable mud till he reaches the camp. In the hospitals he ministers to the sick and wounded with the skill and tenderness of a woman; and when by gentle touches of humanity he has smoothed the sufferer's pillow, he tries to point to Jesus, and allure to heaven.

As he passes through the camp he hails everybody, and is hailed in turn; for his is the peculiar gift of knowing everyone, and making himself known to all. Now you hear him talking in his broadest Doric to some countryman, and anon he is jabbering in broken French or Italian. Under cover of a cool, easy, off-hand exterior he conceals an

intense desire to say some good, strong thing bearing on *eternity*; and rarely is the opportunity missed of making the home-thrust right under the fifth rib. Sometimes he is repulsed, but he knows conscience is on his side. Sometimes he is answered with a smile, and "Ah, sir, that is all very well, but it won't do here." This is a good opening for the missionary's heaviest shot. "But death is here, and how are you going to meet God?" Occasionally he is met with a raking fire of profanity, and is put to grief and silence. He tries all his keys into the locked heart. Perhaps the man was once at the Sabbath-school; perhaps he has a mother, the traces of whose love even sin can hardly obliterate. He finds an opening at length, and the man who met him with swearing and laughter goes away in tears. Onward amidst the tents the missionary holds his way, a strong sower scattering good wheat upon the waters,—the folly of reason, and the wisdom of faith. Sometimes his heart faints within him; but he quickly renews his strength in fellowship with some one of his godly friends.

After a hard day's work he makes his way to the market at Kadi Keni, to "forage" for dinner. Here too he often does some business for his Master. Frequently, indeed, he stands for hours amidst a crowd gathered out of many nations, and endeavours to find an entrance for the word of life. On returning home, he cooks his meal only to find that his appetite is gone. But dinner or no dinner his day's work is not yet done.

The last hours of the day are spent in writing his journal, and in attending to a vast correspondence by letter. Many write him from all parts of the three kingdoms, inquiring about their relatives and friends in the army. Not one scrap is neglected, and an answer is duly sent. Commissioned by the sick and wounded, he writes on their behalf to wife, or mother, or sister, or affianced one, far away. Besides all that he must prepare his quarterly report, and not forget the claims upon his pen of his numerous friends, whilst the public ear must be gratified by stirring letters in the newspapers and religious periodicals. His writing is not done in an easy chair and slippers; it is subject to frequent interruption by visitors from the allied camps, for whom the old stable begins to have rare attrac-

tions. Be he soldier or navy, Sardinian or Turk, officer or man, the missionary is at his visitor's service. The pen is laid aside for the employment of his most effective weapon, —frank, genial, copious, and forcible speech. His words are often quaint in the extreme, but they are as nails fastened in a sure place. The oddity of his sayings may provoke a smile; but he is a wise fisher of men, and knows how to bait his hooks.

Such then is his daily life in the Crimea; and ere the last sand of the glass has seen him rise from his knees to creep into his corner for the night, it is no more than truth to say that the work of two days has been pressed into one.

A few extracts from his published journals may be here given:

“April 10th. At Sebastopol. A sheet of fire as it were encircled it; the engines of death poured forth their deadly volleys,—the sun shone forth brightly, marking forth each embrasure in bold relief in the devoted city. It was a trying sight, and finding no opportunities of usefulness, owing to the excitement prevalent, I retired early to my quarters, anxious that the day might soon arrive when the alarm of war should be heard no more, and the din of battle be for ever hushed.

“April 14th. Took farewell of the Hospital Ship, where for nine weeks I had been living. My work on board was pleasant and painful—far more pleasant than painful; for I sought to know amongst them nothing else ‘save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.’ I had spoken to many of them about their souls—had prayed by their sick beds, and given them many tracts, and the result of all the judgment of the great day shall bring to light. May it be found that the arrow of conviction had reached some heart, and that souls there had been ‘born again to God.’

“April 16th. On board Transport No. — to visit the soldiers invalided for England. Many a poor sick man seemed to revive at the prospect of once again meeting those he loved in his native land. The scene could not be described; it was pleasure mingling with pain; they were going home, yet leaving many friends behind. They had high hopes, yet many fears. I had known most of them during the winter, and the most devoted of all my friends

and the best loved was amongst them. Gladly was I welcomed each day I went on board ere they started, and the supply of tracts given for the voyage was highly valued. To each I gave a Testament for reading on the voyage, the gift of Colonel L——, and had, to remind them of the Crimea, to write my name in each. I parted with them with much sorrow, which I believe was mutual. As I saw the vessel leave the harbour a tumult of feelings filled my heart. These veteran sick soldiers were leaving the land where they had known so many trials—met so many difficulties—seen such deadly work. I could only commend them to the care of Him who holdeth the winds in the hollow of his hand, and who could guide them safely to their own fatherland.

“April 18th. I am distributing tracts on the wharf—met a soldier who had been long confined to hospital. I had met him before, and had gained his confidence. He asked me to go aside and talk with him. I did so, and his first inquiry was for a Bible: he said he had never read it, or had one to read, being deeply opposed to it, now he felt the need of reading it for himself. I had much conversation with him about the need of spiritual religion, and commending the Lord Jesus to him and giving him my last Bible, bade him for the present farewell, as he had to go to his battery on the following day.

“April 20th. Spent the afternoon with Colonel ——, sick on board ship. Rarely, if ever, have I spent such a hallowing hour. He told me much of the Lord’s kind dealings with him, and the marvellous way He had led him since called by his Spirit to be a partaker of the glorious gospel of the ever-blessed God. He has done much for the spiritual welfare of his men, and returns to England beloved by all, yet his loss is deeply regretted. Before leaving he made me a present of several copies of the Scriptures in all the languages of the East, and a goodly number of English and French Testaments.

“April 22nd. In the evening with the Rev. Mr. G——, railway chaplain; held open-air service; the attendance was good, most being soldiers. It was sweet to sing songs of praise on the outskirts of Balaklava, and pleasant to hear the voice of prayer amidst the round of oaths and blasphemy from the huts around.

"In the front, at —— battery, met one of the most pleasing trophies of grace it has been my privilege to witness, in the case of bombardier ——. Truly the meeting was a joyous one to both. He has charge of the hospital attached to the battery, and every good influence he brings to bear on the invalids. It has been his custom, in case he should be taken prisoner, to carry his Bible in his breast with him to the trenches or on the march—as he remarked, 'if taken prisoner he should at least have one to speak to him.' Yes, and I believe he hears and follows the voice as few, very few soldiers are found to do. We walked long together, and next day he visited me, and we had prayer and reading the Word. A pleasing trait in his character is, he supports an aged father in the Highlands of Scotland, and that very day gave me seven sovereigns to transmit for him.

"A Russian officer, taken prisoner a few days ago, called on me, and through an interpreter asked for a Bible. I presented him with one, for which he seemed very grateful. An opportunity of giving the Russian Testaments now and then presents itself, and it is embraced.

"April 29th. A good few were wounded last night in the trenches by a sortie made from Sebastopol. They were brought to hospital to-day, and to those not seriously hurt I gave a Testament. Poor fellows! they seemed much softened and melted. I was, and have often been, much struck by their calm endurance of pain, and their unwavering fortitude.

"A corporal of artillery called on me for tracts and books, for himself and a few comrades attached to the siege-train. They have not the same time many others have, and it was the more pleasing to see their desire for reading.

"Visited Main Guard, and presented each soldier on guard with a Bible. I found confined a soldier transported for life. In a fit of intoxication he had seized a musket and fired it, wounding a man. I spoke kindly to him of his condition as a sinner in the sight of a holy God, and tried to open up the heart-cheering, soul-comforting, soul-saving truth—'It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acception, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—even the chief:' the strong man was unmanned

and bowed to the dust. It seemed deeply to touch his heart—the message of mercy carried to him, and the kindness in visiting him. I presented him with a Bible, which in his solitary confinement he promised to read, and took farewell of him, to see him no more on earth—in the earnest hope that he might yet be a trophy of redeeming love—a diadem in Immanuel's crown, in the day when He maketh up his jewels. It seemed on leaving as if I could sing with a joyous heart :

“‘There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.’

“Presenting a Testament to a sailor, he said, ‘It's of no use to offer me that ; I hate my work and everything else ; my life is a torment to me ; and, alas, it's all one thing.’ Argued with him, if this was so bad a world, would it not be wiser to seek a better one to come ? and urged on him the necessity of doing so. He took the Testament with the promise of reading it.

“Visited by Quarter-master-sergeant. We spent the afternoon together in reading and prayer.

“Attended and took part with the Rev. G. G——, at the funeral of a man killed by accident ; it was a heart-touching scene. In the evening, just as the sun had sunk, we moved beyond the lines ; the grave was already made, and the busy hum of voices could be distinctly heard in the camp. As we stood in prayer around the grave, the gentle breeze bore the sound of the cannonade distinctly towards us. The company gathered were select and numerous, and I believe every one felt as we stood by the open grave, we were in the midst of strangers—far from home, friends, and country. As the address proceeded, marked impressions were made, and I believe I am right in saying, the Lord was with us of a truth.

“Visited by a sergeant of the —— at three o'clock p.m., and by ten he was dead. Whilst with me I could see symptoms of cholera on his countenance, but little, ah, little did I think, when speaking to him, he would be so soon in eternity. This terrible scourge has again broken out in our army. We are surrounded on all hands by death and

disease, and life is felt to be most uncertain. How solemn to see the mighty mass hurrying to the grave—how solemnizing to see such crowds marching to eternity. Even during my stay in this land I can look back and see tents re-crowded, but not by those I had known; ranks filled, but not by those to whom once and again it had been my privilege to address the gospel message of salvation. Thousands have passed away, as the leaves in autumn or the snow-flakes before the sun. Often when sinking at heart, have I wished I could cry in the ears of God-taught souls at home, ‘What meaneth thy sleep? Are you girding yourselves for the conflict? Are you wrestling with the God of Jacob and prevailing?’ Ay, and it has come with deeper force, as I have seen the Lord during the last few months gathering home his children from the army, and leaving it well-nigh forsaken of those who fear his name.

“All things at present speak loudly, and urge to instant, deep, believing, persevering prayer for the descent of the Holy Ghost, that waters may break out in the wilderness, and streams in the desert:—

“‘Then shall the earth yield her increase;
God, our God, bless us shall.
God shall us bless; and of the earth,
The ends shall fear Him all.’”

In Mr. Hayward, an English chaplain and devoted minister of Christ, he found a true friend. In all his troubles Mr. Hayward came to his help. When about to be evicted from his humble dwelling, the good chaplain interfered, and he was allowed to remain. When the priest at Balaklava attempted to stop the distribution of tracts, his faithful friend withstood the priest, and the work went on. They laboured much together. Laden with material and spiritual comforts, they often sallied forth in company to visit the sick, the wounded, and the dying. Sometimes they did their cooking together, the Rev. chaplain trying his culinary skill in making a pudding of biscuit, while the lay missionary washed a few potatoes which he had been fortunate enough to procure about the ships. At every juncture in the war they retired to a lonely spot to pray; and never could Matheson forget the impression made upon his heart when as they knelt Hayward would raise his noble counte-

nance toward heaven, and amidst the thunder of the cannon plead with a voice full of emotion, "Lord, prepare those that are appointed to die." They organised a service in which, besides prayer, praise, and preaching, Hayward introduced the practice of reading all round. This gave additional interest to the meeting ; and it was pleasing to see a General and a navy reading each his verse in turn. The devoted chaplain spent his private means in promoting the good of the soldiers. At length, exhausted by his great labours, he fell ill, and was obliged to leave. In his last sermon—a memorable one—he told his audience he had changed his mind in regard to the apostolical succession ; he now believed that all who brought souls to Jesus were of the true apostolical succession. His friend, our Scripture-reader, assisted in conveying him on board ship, and they laid him gently down upon the quarter deck beside other sick ones, to whom the afflicted chaplain began to speak of Christ. There Matheson and Hayward parted, with such pangs of sorrow as large and true hearts only feel. The two faithful soldiers of the cross now worship and serve where the din of war is hushed for ever, and the weary are at rest.

Sad were the sights witnessed by the Scripture-reader every day. Hundreds of sick and wounded were brought down to Balaklava,—famished, emaciated, clothed in rags, many a noble form, a total wreck from lack of timely aid. He wept at the sight. The sufferers fixed their eyes on him in touching appeal, and many uttered a piercing cry for water. He did what he could. Some of them he saw die on the wharf. On board many lay huddled together under the open hatchway. Some lay on bags of biscuit—anywhere, anywhere in the hurry and helplessness. "Scotland I'll never see again," was the heart-piercing lament of a poor Scotch soldier laddie. Ah, no ! Poor boy, he never did see Scotland again. A Lincolnshire lad whom he sought and found was unable to speak a word. "Your mother bade me seek you," said the missionary. At this word the dying soldier suddenly revived, and exclaimed, "My mother ! O my mother !" It was the last flicker of the candle. He said no more, and died. The last tender throb of his heart was given to her who had known its first gentle beat.

Suffering does not necessarily soften and refine. Feelings and affections are tender plants : unless care is taken, rough winds blight and kill them. A heart-hardening process in the army was only too apparent. One day the missionary, marking the conduct of a burying party who had cast the dead into a pit with no ordinary levity, admonished them with much feeling and impressiveness. A party of soldiers was one fine day seen playing at cards in the trenches. A shot laid one of them low. Instantly they rose, and carrying the dead man away, returned in a few minutes and resumed the game. Despite all this callousness of heart, the missionary often succeeded in making an impression even to tears. In particular, he knew how to reach the hearts of his countrymen, and not seldom did he unseal the fountains of emotion by an allusion to Auld Scotland, the scenes of boyhood, the parish school, a question in the Shorter Catechism, or the 23rd Psalm, "The Lord's my Shepherd ; I'll not want," learned at a mother's knee.

He was very careful in respect of the matter contained in the tracts he put into circulation. By whomsoever issued he cared not, provided only they contained the truth as it is in Jesus. A great heap of Popish trash, full of Mariolatry, coming into his possession, he was at a loss how to dispose of them. By the help of a party of soldiers, he dug a deep trench. "There," he says, "we gave them decent burial ;" adding with grim humour, "We read no burial service over them, and dropped no tears ; but quietly said in our hearts, 'Let the memory of the wicked rot.' Such was the burial of dead tracts. Another heap, "all about schism, and not at all about Christ," he thrust into a Russian furnace, at which he and a friend warmed their toes. In all conscience they knew enough already about schism in the Crimea ; what they needed was union with Christ and peace. A third parcel of rubbish he took out in a boat, and cast the dangerous lies into the sea. "We put poison out of the way of children," says he. This, verily, was soldier-like work.

One night, weary and sad, he was returning from Sebastopol to his poor lodgings in the old stable at Balaklava. He had laboured all day with unflagging energy, and now his strength was gone. He was sickened with the sights he had seen, and was depressed with the thought that the siege

was no nearer an end than ever. As he trudged along in the mud knee-deep, he happened to look up and noticed the stars shining calmly in the clear sky. Instinctively his weary heart mounted heavenward in sweet thoughts of the "rest that remaineth for the people of God," and he began to sing aloud the well-known scriptural verses :

"How bright these glorious spirits shine !
Whence all their white array ?
How came they to the blissful seats
Of everlasting day ?

"Lo ! these are they from sufferings great,
Who came to realms of light,
And in the blood of Christ have washed
Those robes which shine so bright."

Next day was wet and stormy, and when he went out to see what course to take, he came upon a soldier standing for shelter below the verandah of an old house. The poor fellow was in rags, and all that remained of shoes upon his feet were utterly insufficient to keep his naked toes from the mud. Altogether he looked miserable enough. The kind-hearted missionary spoke words of encouragement to the soldier, and gave him at the same time half-a-sovereign with which to purchase shoes, suggesting that he might be supplied by those who were burying the dead. The soldier offered his warmest thanks, and then said, "I am not what I was yesterday. Last night, as I was thinking of our miserable condition, I grew tired of life, and said to myself, Here we are not a bit nearer taking that place than when we sat down before it. I can bear this no longer, and may as well try and put an end to it. So I took my musket and went down yonder in a desperate state about eleven o'clock ; but as I got round the point, I heard some person singing, 'How bright these glorious spirits shine,' and I remembered the old tune and the Sabbath-school where we used to sing it. I felt ashamed of being so cowardly, and said, Here is some one as badly off as myself, and yet he is not giving in. I felt he had something to make him happy of which I was ignorant, and I began to hope I too might get the same happiness. I returned to my tent, and to-day I am resolved to seek the one thing." "Do you know who the singer was ?" asked the missionary. "No," was the reply. "Well,"

said the other, "it was I;" on which the tears rushed into the soldier's eyes, and he requested the Scripture-reader to take back the half-sovereign, saying, "Never, sir, can I take it from you, after what you have been the means of doing for me."

He says he did not find many real Christians in the army. There were a few stars of the first magnitude, and they shone conspicuous in so dark a sky. Our lay missionary was not long in discovering those who feared the Lord; and he found in them true friends. The first time he entered the tent of Capt. Hedley Vicars, he observed that although the officer was absent at the time, his Bible lay open upon a sort of table made of an old box. Thus the godly Vicars showed his colours, the open Bible intimating to all who entered on what terms they might have his fellowship. "His manliness and whole-heartedness," says Mr. Matheson, "struck you at once. There was nothing morose or gloomy about him; nothing to repel. He retained the freshness of boyhood with wisdom above his years. At our first meeting my heart was glued to him at once." In his journal he writes: "March 19th. At Sebastopol. Met with Dr. Cay and Major Ingram in Vicars' tent. We had prayer and reading the Word together. It was to us all a well in the desert, a bright spot amidst surrounding gloom. We blessed God on hearing that a day of national humiliation and prayer was appointed. Cay and Vicars accompanied me on my way. After Cay left us, Vicars and I stood on the plateau above Sebastopol, the doomed city as it was often called lying in its beauty before us. The sky was without a cloud: the sea was as calm as a pond. It was on one of those sweet evenings you never can forget. Our conversation was on the purity, blessedness, and endless peace of heaven, where the din of battle shall never be heard, nor the strifes of earth be known. We expressed to one another much longing to reach it. Speaking of some who had gone, we remembered Peden at the grave of Cameron exclaiming, 'O to be wi' Ritchie!' and our feeling was the same. We could hardly part. He agreed to meet and spend a day with me at Balaklava."

On the day fixed for the meeting Hedley Vicars was taken home to his God. Matheson was overwhelmed with

grief, and could only exclaim, "Dear, dear Vicars!" As he stood beside the grave on the day of burial he felt in his inmost heart as if "another link had been snapped on earth, and another bond formed in heaven."

One of his best friends was Bombardier M'L., a warm-hearted highlander and a Christian. Just as the alarm was sounded and the men were called to arms, Mr. Matheson on entering the Bombardier's tent found him buckling himself for the fight and putting his Bible into his bosom, saying, "If I fall, it will be there: and if I am taken prisoner, it will speak to me, and I can never be weary with such a companion." One day when they had retired to a quiet spot for prayer and reading of the Word of God, a shell dropped at their feet. On this they went a little further off; but again the exercises were disturbed by another terrible invader which fell beside them, shaking the very ground beneath them. "Never mind," said the soldier, "it is only the devil trying to spoil our enjoyment: let us go on." They had just resumed when whiz, whiz, with a loud fall a thirty-two pound shot lay beside them. The missionary was alarmed, but the soldier calmed his fear by quietly saying,

"Not a shaft can hit
Till the God of love sees fit."
LOVE OF GOD

This brave man, Matheson used to tell, once stood alone by his gun in the midst of an assailing Russian host, and in a hand-to-hand encounter maintained his ground till the enemy was driven back, one of the Russians with whom he grappled falling dead at his feet.

The missionary, peaceful though his part of the business was, occasionally experienced danger, and had his narrow escapes. One day, when conversing with a godly officer in a retired spot, the latter said, "We have been long enough here, let us move away." No sooner had they removed than a 13-inch shell dropped and burst on the very spot where they had been standing. "God had cared for us," he says, "and we were safe."

"At Sebastopol during the unsuccessful attack on the Mamelon. It was a fearful night. Thousands were hurried into eternity, and yet our soldiers marched cheering to the trenches, and seemed totally unconcerned. The mail had

arrived just ere they marched, and you could see them reading the letters from home. Two hours after, they were dead or dying. There seemed to reign an utter recklessness of life, and I could hear the wild oaths as they marched bandied about in the ranks. I had an opportunity of speaking a few words to some of them, and during part of the night remained with the outlying sentries, in one of whom I felt special interest. At midnight went to the tent of Bombardier —, and had prayer with him. In the morning all was calm, save now and then shot from some heavy gun, and the wounded were carried away in great numbers. It is in such scenes as these one can truly appreciate the reign of righteousness yet to arise on this benighted world, and long and pray for its speedy advent."

One day, 17th June, we find him speaking about the "one thing needful" to "a large draft for the Rifles, mostly boys," newly arrived. On landing they are drawn up and ranged, before "marching to the front;" and as he slips out and in among them, giving them Testaments and speaking in his own hearty, affectionate way about home, and battle, and death, and eternity, he is pleased to mark unwonted signs of emotion, and remarks that "it seemed as if their hearts had got tender when brought so near the seat of conflict." These boys were going to be butchered on the morrow at the Redan. "Next day," he adds, "I was at Sebastopol, and some of these very men were carried past wounded, whilst others had been killed in the fight."

"Attended and took part in the meeting, specially with reference to the expected assault on the morrow. The worthy chaplain's address was most solemn, affecting, and impressive. It was indeed a night of deepest feeling, and much of the Lord's presence was enjoyed."

In reference to the disastrous attack on the Redan, he writes in his Journal:—"June 18th. Early in the morning went to Sebastopol. I trust higher and holier motives than those of mere curiosity led me. Was eye-witness to all the proceedings of the fatal morning. It produced feelings that cannot be expressed; to hear and see the deadly conflict, and be witness to the dead and dying carried past, enduring their sufferings with calm fortitude and un murmuring silence. Spoke words of kindness to a few; and sought, as able, to

tell others the lesson to be learned, viz., to seek the Lord, who only could grant victory, and put no confidence in an arm of flesh. When the fury of the storm had passed, and something of a depressing calm was felt, looked in at — Hospital, but could not stand the sight. Some had limbs amputated; others hands off; and many were suffering from unextracted bullets. There are events in every man's history he can hardly forget, and through grace, I should like to retain the many lessons taught me on the 18th of June, before Sebastopol."

He was well received by the sailors in the harbour of Balaklava. When not admitted on board he left a parcel of carefully selected tracts to be distributed among the men. One day a soldier refusing a tract, a sailor with the wonted frankness and good humour of Jack stepped up and said, "If he won't, I will," adding for the encouragement of the missionary, "Thank ye, sir; I like a good yarn." Captain T——, master of a transport, used to hoist the Bethel flag on his ship, and Matheson held service on board.

He was also called to minister to the navvies of the Army Works Corps, among whom cholera had broken out. As early as five in the morning he was astir with his Bible and his medicine. His counsel and aid were in great demand, for the navvies had taken it into their heads that no medicines were so effective as his. Something, no doubt, was due to "the effectual fervent prayer" which "availeth much." This opportunity of usefulness was seized with his usual promptitude and good sense; but the work sometimes proved more than even his strong frame could bear.

Mr. Gymgell, chaplain of the Army Works Corps, being taken ill of cholera, our missionary watched him till he died. Through the long weary hours of his last night on earth, Matheson sat by his bedside ministering to him, till at length, as it drew towards the dawn, the faithful chaplain, breathing out faith and hope, peacefully fell asleep in Jesus. On the Scripture-reader devolved the last offices of friendship, and keen were his feelings in transmitting the sad tidings to the widow and children far away. Just as the sun was setting they buried him in a quiet spot near the grave of Admiral Boxer, and Matheson addressed all those present with more than ordinary impressiveness

and power. He felt as if the disease had fastened on himself, and he spoke with the light of a near eternity in his soul.

Utterly prostrate, he reeled home to the old stable, and crept into his comfortless bed, where he lay sick, helpless, and alone for three days and three nights. Growing worse hour by hour, he was at length no longer able to rise for his only comfort—a drink of water; and despairing of life he turned his face to the wall to die. This the hour of his extremity was God's opportunity. The Lord sent an angel to minister to him in the person of Mr. Medley, a gentleman in the Commissariat, who had formerly been a London City-missionary. Happening to come to the door, he discovered the forlorn condition of the Scripture-reader, ran to his relief, and never left him till he began to recover. "It was the sound of Mr. Medley's voice singing psalms," said our missionary, "that first brought me to myself, and from that moment I began to get better."

For the benefit of his health he took a trip to Trebizond, of which he speaks in a letter to his sister. "I wrote you that I was going to Trebizond. I did go, and was absent a week. I cannot tell you how much better I was for the trip. It was in the 'City of Aberdeen' I went, and the passage was beautiful. It would be impossible for me to describe the beauty of Trebizond and the adjacent country. I hardly thought such gorgeous scenery was to be seen on earth. Should I be spared to return I may be able to convey some idea of it to you. I was most taken up about its spiritual condition, which is sad in the extreme. Of 60,000 inhabitants there is only one Englishman, the British Consul. The Americans have a missionary there doing a good work; but as he had gone to Constantinople I did not see him. I left a letter for him and some books. Some of the converts I saw and was much pleased with them. I felt, O how deeply! the want of knowing their language; for as I walked through the city given up to idolatry, I wished I had been able to preach 'Christ and Him crucified.' The sight of so many thousands believing a lie gives one an interest in missions such as many speeches could not give. The Turks in Trebizond I found to be most inveterate against Christianity; but their days are numbered. . . .

Although only a week absent I had many friends wearying for me, and once again I was glad to see them and enter on my work. All friends here, however, must be held very loosely, for they soon remove, or are taken away."

The market-place, Kadi Keni, situated about a mile from Balaklava, was a stirring spot. English, French, Italians, Turks, Jews, Maltese, and others, assembled here. The Jews were extremely debased, but the Maltese, if possible, were more wicked still; for they were sometimes caught in the act of spoiling the dead. The market was just the place for our Scripture-reader: here he did much business for his Master. No Jew was more bent on making gain than he was on winning souls; his constant cry was, "Who will buy the truth?"

At Kadi Keni he met officers and soldiers of the Sardinian army, and made their acquaintance. "From the day that the compact, brave, accomplished, and well-behaved Sardinian army set foot on Crimean soil," he writes, "my heart was set on doing them good, and I prayed that God would enable me to spread the word among them. Knowing that God could bless one text as well as a thousand, I committed to memory from the Italian New Testament that gospel in miniature in John iii. 16: 'For God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' I went out, and standing amongst them repeated the passage, and then passed from group to group with my little gospel message. Then I took the New Testament and went out reading it as best I could, till a deep interest to possess it was called forth, and the time had come for its distribution."

Cholera, too, came to clear the way for the servant of the Lord Jesus. Many soldiers of the Sardinian army were taken ill: there was a lively demand for the medicines, of which Mr. Matheson had a large store, and very soon his services were held in as high repute by the Italians as by the English navvies. He saw the door of access opening; he felt assured the Lord was answering his prayers; and so incessantly and lovingly did he labour among them, that he came to be named, "The Sardinians' Friend." His kindness won a way into their hearts; prejudices gave way; he

became a universal favourite, and many of the Italians received the Word of God at his hands, when they would have rejected it at the hands of any others.

In his journal of June 1st he writes: "Began the distribution of Italian New Testaments in fear and much trembling. Opening after opening presented itself, and the avidity with which many received them was remarkable, whilst others sternly refused them. One officer asked for a copy, and assisted me to supply all his company, remarking, 'A better book they could not possess.'" Again, June 2nd, "Took a large bag full of Italian New Testaments to market-place, Kadi Keni. Met many Sardinians, and on presenting them with the Word was offered by nine-tenths payment for them. Some sternly refused. The joy of others was great."

Day after day the interest increased. One walked five miles in the darkness of night to knock at the old stable door and get the Word of God. Another came begging the whole Bible, because he had found the New Testament so good. "I have a great treasure now," said another, as he put the book in his bosom, and went away. At five in the morning the missionary is aroused by Sardinian soldiers seeking the Word of God. They were going to join the advance, and feared losing their only opportunity of procuring a copy. A Waldensian corporal lying ill at this time, in answer to the kind inquiries of the Scripture-reader, said, "The source of all true courage is, whilst the body is on earth, the soul is in heaven,"—a truly Waldensian and martyr-like view of the matter. "Spoke to the Sardinian guard," Matheson writes in his journal, "and told them of the only Saviour of sinners, and gave each of them a New Testament. They said they would take them home to Italy. Visited by seven Sardinian officers, who wished to have Bibles. As an army of reserve, they said they had much time for reading, and would take their Bibles home as a memorial of English affection and of the Crimea." Two Tuscans, burning with zeal for liberty and Italy, enlightened and able to speak English fluently, visited the stable, and heard the good old story of freedom through Jesus Christ. A Tyrolese, of noble countenance, who had fought under Garibaldi at Rome, and shared the perils of his flight, received a copy of the Word, and became attached to the

missionary. Thus the work went on day by day, despite all the efforts of the priests, who did their utmost to stop it.

Duncan's frank, genial disposition, and intense sympathy with the Italians in their aspirations for national liberty and unity, were largely instrumental in opening the door for the Word of God among the Sardinian troops. God gave him favour with the officers. Dr. S——, who could speak English, became his friend. That gentleman had been led to embrace Protestantism by reading the Bible, and comparing the religion of Rome with the truth. He introduced Mr. Matheson to other officers, who invited him to dinner. The missionary made a speech, Dr. S. being interpreter. After depicting in glowing colours what he firmly believed would be the future of a free and united Italy, whose flag should one day be unfurled on the Capitol of Rome, he proceeded to speak of the gospel as the greatest glory of a nation, and Jesus Christ as the only true liberator of men. His sincerity and enthusiasm carried all their hearts as by storm, and thenceforth "The Sardinians' Friend" enjoyed all but unbounded liberty and respect in carrying on the work of the Lord in the Italian army.

Thus his field of labour was constantly widening, and knowing that the day of opportunity would soon close, he pressed into every breach with indomitable courage and unquenchable zeal, till at length in the capture of Sebastopol he saw a certain indication of the end of his mission. His account of the final bombardment and assault deserves a page.

"Balaklava, 10th September, 1855.

"The din of battle has been hushed for a time, and I have found a little leisure to write. I hardly know where to begin, and I do not for a moment conceive I shall be able to give you any right idea of the transactions of the last few days. My last told you of the mighty preparations going silently and mechanically on for the final assault. For days and days nothing was seen but the transit of ammunition, and the transport of gabions, &c., for the front. The fire for some time back every night had been truly terrific. It seemed the Russians well knew how our works were coiling themselves around their devoted city, and if they could not pre-

vent this, they seemed determined to annoy us. What was often thought to be the re-opening of the bombardment was only meant to allow the French at the Malakoff and us at the Redan to finish the works under cover of it. On the morning of the 6th it seemed as if all batteries had opened. Gun after gun sent forth its deadly charges, and during the whole day nothing else was heard but the whiz of shells as they flew through the air. The accuracy of our aim was remarkable. In one minute you could count nine shells bursting upon the parapet of the Redan, and the Malakoff seemed entirely shrouded in a sable covering of smoke and dust. Thus it continued during the day, and as evening had settled on us, one of the Russian ships in the harbour was seen to be on fire. Slowly the flames flew up the rigging, and soon the burning fragments were scattered around. It was a brilliant sight. The dark night—the horizon lighted up for miles—the city seen as if by day—the sound of the rifles, as they went off, pop, pop, in the advanced works—the heavy cannonade—and the star-like fuses of the shells, as they rolled through the air, made it all awfully imposing. For hours the ship burned, and when morning broke you could see the hulk burned to the water's edge, and the other vessels lying lazily in the spot where they have so long been.

“If the fire of the 6th was heavy, it was as nothing to the fire which opened on the 7th. Every spot seemed to possess a gun, and from every side the smoke, fire, and noise were terrific. It seemed as if all the guns and mortars in the French left went off at one moment. Volley after volley shook the air, and the whole seemed as made of living fire. For a short time it seemed as if they had spent their fury, and as if the work were done. The guns were only cooling. In a little while they burst forth with greater fury than before. Thus during the whole day it continued. There seemed no slackening, no flagging, no wearying. Now and then the Russians replied, but it was feeble and faint—not one shot for the thousand given. Thousands of spectators, chiefly, yea, almost all, soldiers, crowded the heights, where a passing glimpse could be had as the smoke cleared away. It was touching to see them in little groups discussing the probability of an attack, and their remarks were often of a

mellowing cast. Grey-haired soldiers felt certain of it, though all was kept profoundly silent, and it sent a strange thrill through the heart to see some of the young, only joined a few days before, gambolling to the sound. During the night there was no cessation, and the rockets flew at intervals, kindling the city in various places. Sleep was far from our eyes. The night seemed long and dreary, and the sighing of the wind on the fierce blast seemed to sound in the ears like sighs deep and loud from a sepulchre. At length morning broke, cold and cheerless. The sun now and then seemed ready to shoot forth, but kept back, as if afraid of shining on the work of the bloody day. The wind was strong, and carried the dust in whirling eddies through the camp. It blew well-nigh a hurricane, and seemed ready to carry all before it. We approached Cathcart's Hill, and found the whole line guarded by our dragoons. One could scarcely stand for the cold, and yet the interest of the moment absorbed every thought. The cannonade seemed still fierce, and now and then through the strange mingling of smoke, fire, and dust, you could catch a glimpse of the two spots of interest—the Malakoff and the Redan—greatly battered, and only now and then firing a solitary shot, as tokens of being yet unsubdued.

“By seven a.m. the Light Division had marched. By eleven the other divisions had assembled, and marched to their respective posts. They wound down the various ravines in good order, and seemingly knowing the desperate nature of the work they were to do. I saw several soldiers' wives weeping after them as they went. Each man carried forty-eight hours' provisions. Their advance could not be seen, for the wind carried the dust and smoke in darkening columns, shrouding all well-nigh in midnight darkness. It was blowing into our works, and straight away from the Russians. A large building burned in Sebastopol, and yet it was scarcely noticed, so eagerly did all look for twelve o'clock. It came. We heard the crack of musketry at the Malakoff, and the cannonade still went on. In a few minutes the report, 'The Malakoff is taken,' reached the camp. The 3rd Division in reserve gave three hearty cheers, which could be distinctly heard through the camp above the din of all. The opposition at the Malakoff was

faint. In ten minutes the eagles of France floated on it. It seemed unexpected. The French works were so near it—one bound, and it had fallen. All eyes turned to the Redan. Here, in a moment, the battle raged. Such hot musketry has rarely been seen. Our men mounted its parapets, and were hurled into the ditch below. Man after man ascended, and one officer, mounting the parapet, waved his sword and cheered them forward. He was soon laid in the dust. Mass after mass pressed forward, and, over the dead bodies of their comrades, got within. They had gained it, but the dense mass of Russian infantry poured in countless thousands upon them, and one battery within, unseen, played hard. The Russian force, in leaving the Malakoff, poured into the Redan, determined to make it the final settling-ground. The few of our soldiers that got a footing made a noble stand, but they were as a drop in the sea, or a leaf in the forest, compared with the dense masses that came against them. They had to retire, and yet time after time they rushed to the assault, and kept the enemy from gaining one inch of ground. Between the Malakoff and Redan the contest fiercely raged. Victory seemed to hang tremblingly in the balance, and moments passed as hours—so deep was the suspense. At three o'clock the wounded began to be carried up. It was a sad and melancholy procession. The Woronzoff Road was one continuous stream—officers and men all alike. Some walked themselves, limping, whilst the blood oozed from their wounds, and now and then, as the wind threw the cloak or covering a little aside, you saw the pale cold face of some one who had gone from the battle to the judgment seat. As I stood marking the sickening sights, three soldiers' wives rushed down the ravine, asking after their husbands, and presenting a dreadful spectacle of misery and grief. A ball from some of the Russian batteries fell close beside them, and they had to run with all speed to the rear. The wind still blew, and the cold continued intense. Now and then it lulled for a moment, and the sun burst brightly forth. All was silent along the French right, and only our batteries and the French left kept up the fire. The mark was still the Redan. It was evident the Russians were losing heart.

"Night closed on the scene, and the wind died away. The reserves were marched off for the work of the coming day. The town was on fire in several places, and the shipping seemed without a gun. Explosion after explosion took place. At two o'clock—one louder than the rest. Part of the Redan had been sprung. The Highlanders, who behaved nobly, held in reserve for the next assault, entered, and found it evacuated. The Russians had fled, and, whatever else may be said, made a masterly retreat, displaying the most consummate generalship. As they went, they fired all behind them, and our men were not allowed to follow, which was well, for yesterday explosions were taking place the whole day. In the night they had sunk their shipping, so long the terror of the Allies, and the cause of so many deaths. The eye had got so long accustomed to the sight of these mighty vessels, and now it is cheerless to see the waves gently cresting over the spot where they were, and to glance at the large bay without a speck, save a few harmless steamers cowering under the guns of the opposite shore.

"Yesterday, we had our first quiet Sabbath in the Crimea. How pleasant, how calm, how refreshing it dawned upon us! Before, all used to be bustle, and the cannonade kept no Sabbath, and had respect to no commands. Not a gun was now heard. The stillness of death seemed to reign, and the deepest interest to be felt in knowing who had or had not survived. Many a sad blank was found, and I had to weep specially over one friend who had only arrived from England two days before, and who fell at the first attack. He was an officer of the Rifles, and if honoured with a tombstone, the epitaph truly may be, 'He walked with God.' Only a few entered the town yesterday, and our troops moved cautiously, there being so many mines springing. It is all mined. Not a building remains uninjured. Shot and fragments of shell pave every spot. Buildings have been scattered in ruins, and what has been left the flames have devoured. It has a desolate, dreary aspect, and the wind howls hideously through its deserted streets. The dead lie all around, and heap upon heap meets the eye at the various points of sharpest contest. Yesterday and to-day, the last offices are performing for the

dead, laying them in graves on the spot where many of them fell. The stern tide of war has mercilessly swept them away, and left many to deplore their loss. Friend and foe lie together, and Sebastopol is in the possession of our army. It has been got at a dear rate, and the price of it has been much blood. How many thousands, yea tens of thousands, have found their graves before it, there to await till the trump of God shall summon the sleepers to arise! When I think of the mingled joy and weeping the sound of this victory shall produce at home, my soul is filled with deepest feeling. I feel greatly it will be laid to the bravery of our army, and to the skill of our commanders; but those whose hearts are filled with divine light, and who know anything of the tremendous difficulties overcome, and the magnitude of the struggle, will give all the glory to the Lord, to whom it belongs."

The following letter to Mr. P. Drummond, Stirling, will furnish some idea of his work, and the free course of the word of God in the Crimea.

"Balaklava, Sept. 20th, 1855.

"MY DEAR MR. DRUMMOND,—Now that the town of Sebastopol has fallen, and the din of battle for a time has ceased, I have found a little leisure to write to you. And first I desire to thank you very sincerely, in my own name and that of others, for the many kind grants of tracts you have sent from time to time, since December last, and to assure you all have been widely scattered, and in many cases gratefully received. I also enclose you a thank-offering from a few friends of £7 10s., to help you forward in your work. The silver and the gold are the Lord's, and as such we cast it into his treasury.

"I hardly knew from what point to start to let you know of my work since entering this field of death and bloodshed. It has been an eventful, thrilling, soul-trying time; and yet in the midst of all, much of the seed of the kingdom has been scattered—seeing since 4th December last I have given away—tracts, 52,000; Bibles, 622; Testaments, 1477; French Testaments, 770; Bibles, 32; Italian Testaments, 4300; Bibles, 200; Welsh, Russian, and German Testaments, 173; books for officers, 450.

"The work has now and then been pleasant, yet seldom has a joyous heart been known, seeing so much abounding iniquity and such an utter recklessness to the things of eternity. You cannot think what a vast wilderness of ungodliness our army is. You cannot move a step without hearing that name, dearer to you than all others, continually blasphemed. Gambling has been carried on in the hospital, the camp, the trenches, to an amazing degree ; and the curse of our country, drunkenness, is widespread indeed. The sufferings of last winter were not overdrawn, nor was the lesson to be taught ever learned. Judgment hung heavy on us, and it passed away unheeded. The Lord had a few holy witnesses in our army, but most of these were taken away by death, the bullet, or removed to England. No widespread blessing has ever descended, and tens of thousands have passed to the judgment-seat. The sins of our nation were punished in our army ; and a slumbering church started for a moment to sink into a deeper sleep than before. Often when ready to faint have I been sustained by the blessed truth, 'All that the Father hath given *shall* come ;' and some measure of faith in the omnipotent power of the Holy Ghost has revived the drooping heart, and enabled me more urgently to present Christ and Him crucified to dying men. Few have cared for the soldier's soul ; an exception here and there with joy may be made—but Popery and Puseyism have had it much their own way. The means to meet the wants have been totally inadequate, and every barrier has been thrust in the way of those that would. Evangelism has met with little favour, and Rome has plied her arts with untiring assiduity. What has tended much to demoralize our army has been the almost total extinction of the Sabbath. The Crimea has, I may say, known no Sabbaths. True it is, for a few minutes the form of parade-service has been gone through, and the men instantly hurried to fatigue. Let those who would like to see what Britain would be without Sabbaths visit the Crimea, and they will see the soul-destroying effects of it. The poor soldiers long for it to recruit their over-worked systems, but the demands of man cannot afford it, and the ceaseless toil must go on. I wish to draw a veil over much that I have seen in the Crimea these ten months. The scenes

witnessed, and the dark pictures presented, often make the blood run cold, and draw tears from the eyes. Sure am I if it were really known at home by those who know the value of their own souls, they could not but cry, weep, pray, beseeching the Lord to open the windows of heaven and pour down a great and an abundant blessing. One cannot but admire the calm endurance of our army, and stand amazed at their contempt of danger, and the unflinching bravery ever manifested ; and oh, how well it were if a real deep and abiding awakening took place ! then it would be bravery drawn from a right source, and endurance of suffering the result of right principle. Much prayer ought to be made for our neglected army, for it is high time to know the real spiritual state of it, and to awake out of sleep regarding it.

“You are aware, in the end of May the Sardinian army landed here. Hearing of its coming I had sent for thousands of Italian Testaments, not knowing but the Lord would open a way for their distribution. I began the work with much prayer, yet in great fear and trembling. At first it went on slowly. Many prejudices had to be removed, and much wisdom to be evinced. Cholera broke out among them, and many hundreds died. It softened them much ; soon group after group called on me for the Word, sometimes thirty in one day. Since the 1st of June it has continued ; one brought his companion, and another his brother, till 1500 have so visited me. I cannot give you any idea of their eagerness to possess the Word. I have known many come miles for it ; and never have I seen such joy as they manifested while gazing on the precious gift. Had I time, it would be pleasing to me to send you more details, for it has been a glorious, cheering work. Time after time I have gone through their camp, and seen some in little groups reading it, others in their tent ; and in the hospital nothing else is read. Many officers have visited me, written me, or sent for Bibles ; and in some regiments every officer, from the colonel downwards, has got a copy, whilst most of the medical staff have also been supplied. A spirit of earnest inquiry is at work with some, and an apparently anxious desire to know the truth by most. Wondrous are the ways of God. Italy, long shut, is

opening ; Popery is losing its power ; the mask is being torn ; light thrown around ; and who can tell the amount of blessing the 4700 copies of God's Word given to the Sardinian army may be the means of accomplishing ? It is touching to hear them say often, ' My father, my mother, or my sisters, possess not this, and if I return they shall have it.' Those that have been invalided and sent home carried it with them ; and, as they embarked, have held it up to me, saying, ' This is my memorial of the Crimea.' The work is still going on, and I expect, if the door is still open, to circulate 1000 more. Opposition was at one time greatly threatened. A Maynooth priest in our army tried to stir the Sardinian priests against the work, but ere his plans were fully matured he fell sick, and had to leave. One thing is clear, Sardinia is lost to the Pope, and every fresh bull fulminated is making the breach wider and wider. Oh for living men for Italy to preach the everlasting gospel, and for the descent of the Holy Ghost from on high to call the dead to life ! It presents a glorious field. It is ripe for the harvest. Who will enter in and raise the standard of the cross, so long trampled in the dust ; yea, buried under forms, traditions, and soul-destroying ignorance ?

" I cannot find time to tell you of the progress of the truth in Turkey. The only ray of hope is in the American Mission amongst the Armenians, which is greatly prospering. The Turk is what he was. There is no more opening of his mind to receive the truth. His enmity to Christianity is as deep as ever, and the effect produced by the presence of the Allies is bad indeed. As a nation they are dying out ; evidently *doom* is written on Mahomedanism, and it is well. Gladly would I see the Crescent prostrate in the dust, and a Christian state raised on the ruins. The time is fast hastening on ; the night is passing ; the day breaketh. Soon the cry shall be heard throughout earth's millions—' Hallelujah ! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.'

" Wishing you all success, and seeking for you much of the hallowing, humbling grace of the Eternal Spirit, I am, in much haste, your affectionate friend,

" DUNCAN MATHESON."

From September till the winter set in he continued his labours—not, however, without frequent interruptions from sickness and prostration. “Many say, Rest; take things easier,” he writes at this time. “I cannot rest, for it is a mighty graceless army, and needs most tremendous exertions. Oh that I might be the means of saving souls!” Much did he feel the loss of Christian friends. “Captains Craigie, Vicars, and Beaufort are gone. Lieut. Wemyss died on his way to England, and has his grave in the waters of the Bosphorus. I feel it much—keenly, deeply. Oh how cheap is life here! You sorrow for one, for many, and next day you sorrow for more, till the mind gets quite hardened. Many talk of hundreds dying as if it were nothing. Most look not into eternity, and know not the value of souls. I often think it is well I counted the cost ere coming here. I have not been disappointed. It is useless to think of trials, if the Lord prosper you in your work. . . . You and others fear for me. I alone fear not for myself. Am I not in the Lord’s work? Can anything happen without his permission? If I live, let it be to his glory. If I die, may it be for his glory. I am not my own. I know there is victory through the blood of the Lamb; and what after all is death? The entrance to eternal rest—the door to God’s right hand.”

Again and again he is smitten down by the combined effects of fatigue, exposure, and want of material comforts. In a letter he says: “Since I last wrote you I have known what it is to be laid low. Indeed, when I wrote you I felt rather unwell, but thought I should rally, as I have often done. I was seized with violent diarrhoea, accompanied with fever, which continued nearly eight days, five of which I was totally confined to bed. A few days after I took ill my kind friends, Drs. Derriman and Brown, pitched a tent for me at their hospital, and their attention to me was unremitting. Through the mercy of God, I am restored again, and in my own house, and at my work. Many of the poor Sardinians called on me during my illness, and I had to hand them copies of the Word of God from my bed. Indeed every one was exceedingly kind. Most of those who sought to labour are now either dead or left. The doctors say I ought not to remain another winter here on

any account, as those exertions I have through grace been enabled to make must recoil on the system. This is in the Lord's hands."

His privations were often well-nigh past endurance. Often had he suffered the gnawings of hunger, till at length he lost his appetite entirely. "How gracious the Lord is," he says in a letter to his sister; "the last two days I had the delicious pleasure of being hungry." Again, "I am getting sorely out of clothes. Last week I got a present of a new pair of boots sent from England. Next day they were stolen. I had my last shirt on. I could not find another; but a staff doctor called, and made me a present of one yesterday. So the Lord provides."

At length his failing health compelled him to leave the Crimea, and return to Scotland, where he arrived about the end of the year.

After spending six weeks at home, he set out again for the East, rejoicing, and counting himself more highly honoured than if he were the ambassador of a king. His connection with the Soldiers' Friend Society had ceased on his return home; but, liberally aided by the Countess of Effingham and others, he went forth absolutely his own master, and with an eye single and full of light. Feeling assured that he was called by the great Master to seize an opportunity such as might never recur, he girt up his loins, and at once prayerful as well as self-reliant, cautious as well as enthusiastic, he took his way to the scene of his former labours and sorrows.

His stores of Christian literature for gratuitous distribution were immense, varied, and judiciously selected. Besides Bibles, tracts, and other books in the several languages of the East, he carried with him a considerable number of copies of the Shorter Catechism with proofs, in Italian, under the title of "*Compendium of Christian Doctrine*," and also Paleario's "*Benefits of Christ's Death*," in the same language. His own countrymen were not forgotten. At Gibraltar, Malta, and almost everywhere a slow lumbering voice would be heard asking, "Hae ye ony Bibles wi' Psalms?" Knowing and sympathising with the likings of his countrymen, he was fully prepared to supply honest Sandy's want.

It may be worth while to notice that his services were eagerly sought at this time by more than one Missionary Society or Committee. The "Jews' Conversion Committee" offered to "employ him as an assistant missionary of the Committee at Constantinople, at a salary of £150 a year." At the same time the Free Church Colonial Committee desired to secure his services for the East; but fearing lest he should be trammelled in his work, he declined every offer, in order that he might be free to carry out his own peculiar mission in his own way. Dr. John Bonar, convener of the Colonial Committee, again wrote him in noble, generous words of encouragement. "You go," he writes, "to unfurl the Lord's banner in the sight of assembled nations. You go to breathe words of peace from the Prince of peace amid the din of war. You go to sow the incorruptible seed of the Word, which liveth and abideth for ever, amid the very things which beyond all others show the vanity and uncertainty of all earthly and human things. You go to speak to men of their souls and of eternity, in the midst of the very things which may summon them to that eternity while you yet speak. You go to give the word of life to those to whom it is a sealed fountain at home; and, in a word, to do good to *all* as you have opportunity. Going on such an errand, and called to fulfil so important a mission, we bid you God speed."

LETTERS TO HIS SISTER.

"London, March 6th.

"I long much to get away. I have got everything for my mission I could desire. To-day I have been at Beckenham. I have got forty copies of Captain Vicars' Life. Mr. Moody Stuart went to the Edinburgh Bible Society, and got £25 for me for French Bibles. Mr. Learmouth has paid for 1000 Bibles for me."

"March 14th.

"At sea, off the Spanish coast. We are nearing Gibraltar, and on getting ashore I expect to post this letter for you, that it may relieve any anxiety you may feel. To be united to Jesus is the one great thing. What is all else beside? A dream—a shadow—nothing. To-day I was led to think of my awakening and after-life. What a

miracle of mercy it has all appeared. To be used at all by the Lord is truly wonderful. Yea, it is all his grace—his own peculiar dealing. I long for nothing more than spiritual life. It seems to me, looking at the work to be done and the greatness of eternal things, as if I had not yet really begun to live. What an amount of time have I lost. How little it has been really occupied for the Lord. How little accomplished. Life, life, the endless life of grace, is all I need, and all I want. It is difficult to write with the motion of the vessel. We speed on our voyage. Such is life. Yes, we are passing along. How soon shall it be all done here.”

After touching at Malta, where his soul was vexed at the sight of the Popish mummeries of Good Friday, he reached Constantinople on the 31st March. Here he began the work of scripture distribution at the Sardinian Hospital at Yenikoi, where there is a great rush on the part of the Italian soldiers to obtain copies of the Word of God. Doctors, officers, and men are waiting for him, and their joy is great on seeing their old friend with his precious stores. Day after day he passes, and the work seems to grow.

He again proceeds to the Crimea.

“Crimea, June 16th.

“I do not anticipate staying long in the Crimea. All will depend on my entrance amongst the Russian soldiers. In all my previous journeys the Lord has graciously prospered me, and I hope in this I shall be able to sing the same song, and talk of the same goodness. Since my arrival it has been an incessant whirl. I would I could get rest! But it cannot be. The doors are too open, and the readiness to receive so great, that it must be “now or never.” I expect a thousand French Bibles soon from London. I have already given above five thousand copies of the Word in all languages. Oh for the breath from on high! My heart is set on the Lord. I love his service. I seek grace to glorify Him. Soon all will be done. It is passing away.”

In the arduous work of scripture distribution in the Sardinian army he received no small help from an Italian priest,

who had been favourably impressed by the dying testimony of his nephew Paolo, a young soldier converted by reading a copy of the New Testament given him by Mr. Matheson. When counselled by his uncle to confess, Paolo replied that he had confessed his sins to Jesus Christ, and having received forgiveness, he needed not to confess to man. His beautiful death touched the heart of the priest, who appears to have been a quiet, kind-hearted man.

Early in 1856 some of the Sardinian officers had written to the principal newspaper in Turin, and challenged the priests to come to the Crimea, if they dared, and stop the circulation of the Scriptures. On this an accomplished Jesuit was sent, who on his arrival threatened to have the fellow hanged who was, contrary to all law and order, spreading heresy and Bibles among the good soldiers of Italy, and the children of the Pope. Matheson providentially discovered the Jesuit and his scheme, and informed certain officers (his friends), who outwitted the priest, and he was obliged to sneak away as he came.

One day he found his spiritual stores exhausted. A ship with a fresh stock of books was seen for days in the offing; but stormy weather prevented all access to the vessel. Becoming impatient he got a boat, manned by several stout Aberdonians, and taking the tiller himself, he put off to the ship. In the face of a tremendous sea they endeavoured to make way to the vessel; and when all but baffled, the missionary, in his bluff, hearty style, cheered them on, saying, "Row, boys, row; I'll, may be, tell this yet on the Castle-gate of Aberdeen." They succeeded in reaching the vessel, got the books, and returned to the harbour in safety.

In the report of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, Mr. Matheson, in reference to his work among the Sardinian soldiers, says: "My house at Terrikoi was literally besieged, and day after day I had to return to Constantinople for fresh supplies. On the return of the steamer many were awaiting me on the quay, and sometimes all my books were gone before I could reach the Locanda. Many fresh invalids, scarcely able to walk, applied to me there; and instead of any opposition being thrown in my way by those in command, I was greatly aided by them; indeed they were the first to ask for Bibles. . . . In six days I had

given away 500 Bibles—46 of these to officers. At Terrikoi I did not offer one copy; all were asked for; and pleasing indeed it was to bestow it on one and another and another, who remarked, 'I was robbed of mine at Milan;' or, 'I have long desired one to take home, seeing that in my distant village it cannot be found.'

"The work being completed there, I hastened to the Crimea; and if the interest at Terrikoi was great, it was far transcended by that manifested on my arrival here. Soon the object of my mission ran like wildfire through the camp, and singly, in couples, in groups, yea, in masses, I was visited. In one day seven hundred thus came to me, and were supplied. Officers of all grades called for Bibles; and I have in my possession very many letters sent me by some of them in high standing for the Word. It was perfectly agonizing to have to send away hundreds without it; and I have known soldiers walk six miles, four or five times in succession, for Bibles. Now and then small supplies arrived, and many, in the very act of embarking, came running breathless for that which to them had now become 'more precious than gold.' The new edition was indeed the more highly valued; and many were the expressions of gratitude sent to friends in England for the noble gift. Had I had ten times the number they could have been distributed, as over and over again, when all were gone, many, I hear, offered all they had for a copy. And surely it is pleasing to think of 1000 Testaments and 674 Bibles of this edition being amongst them, and now in Piedmont. Of the 674 Bibles distributed, 250 were given to officers who called for them.

"A nobler army than that of the Sardinians cannot be found. Many, very many of them, are men of great intellect; and it is no unusual thing to meet with men in the ranks who are classical scholars, and who would adorn any society in any country in the world. They have left this land for the land to which they so fondly cling—and whose emancipation from spiritual thralldom they long to see fully consummated—loved by all, and with an affection deep-seated and sincere. What most gladdens the heart is, that few return home without the book of God, the record of eternal life, the gospel of Christ. In faith we look for mighty results.

Piedmont is rising among the nations. She has taken a noble stand. Let but the Word of God be scattered there in rich abundance, in copies of the faithful version of Diodati, the only translation, save in a few instances, I have ever been asked for; nor let it ever be forgotten that they, and they only, are free whom the truth makes free."

At length his work was finished in the Crimea. One result was that eighteen thousand copies of the Word of God were carried into priest-ridden Italy in the knapsacks of the soldiers. He was sent to read the scriptures to his own countrymen, which he did, and at the same time sent a host of scripture-readers into the dominions of the Pope.

After the proclamation of peace, the Russian soldiers came freely into the camp of the Allies. Our missionary's heart was stirred anew; a fresh field presented itself; he was not slow to embrace the opportunity; and he met with no small encouragement among the Russians. Sometimes he was awakened at the dawn of day by a Cossack on his shaggy steed, come to beg a copy of the New Testament. "My friends the Cossacks," he says in a letter, "shewed me much kindness, and I had to submit once and again to the embrace of Russian soldiers, smelling strongly of onions!" The beautiful monastery of St. George, situated on a high perpendicular rock on the sea-side between Balaklava and Kamiesch, he found occupied by seventeen monks, with their superior. Thither he repaired with a bag of Russian New Testaments, and, with the assistance of his friend Dr. C——, presented each of the monks with a copy, which they received most gratefully, and with earnest request for the entire Bible. The missionary, as he passed from cell to cell, offered fervent prayer that God would bless each and all of those peace-loving dwellers in St. George with the saving knowledge of his glorious name.

It was a touching sight to behold as our missionary did the former dwellers returning to seek in vain their once happy homes. So changed was everything by the desolation of war, that often did the poor people, on looking around upon the scene of their former habitations, lift up their voices and weep; and my reader will not marvel when I tell him that the tender-hearted man of God wept with them.

The allied armies took their way back to the setting sun.

Our missionary waited till almost the last man had embarked. "Going to the top of a hill, I looked abroad upon the desolate scene. Miles of huts were left standing without a solitary occupant. Not a human voice was to be heard. Here and there a Russian might be seen prowling through the deserted camp. On my right lay Inkermann and the beautiful valley of the Tchernaya, with the Russian cavalry grazing on its field of battle. A little beyond, in sweet repose, was spread out the plain of Balaklava, scene of heroic daring unsurpassed in the world's history. Sebastopol reposed in calm beauty, rendered more touching by its ruins. Further off the Black Sea looked in the rays of the setting sun like a mirror of glory. Wherever I turned my eye the hill-sides were covered with graves, and every ravine was like a charnel-house. With bursting heart and streaming eyes I thought of the many friends I had lost, and the myriads of broken hearts and bereaved homes far away. All alone I went to take my farewell look of Vicars' and Hammond's graves. Thought upon thought, quicker than the lightning, flashed through my mind as I said to myself, What an army shall arise from these graves on that great day! Each spot will be instinct with life. What a different scene from that once witnessed here, when man girt on his armour to meet man, then fought and conquered, or laid them down to die! These men will rise from the dust of death to face not man but God. At the blast of the archangel's trump the sleeping warriors shall awake. But what an awaking to those who were wrapped in a Christless shroud and laid in a hopeless grave! And how shall the dead in Christ arise with joyous songs of triumph as they shout, 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?' They shall mount up 'to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall they ever be with the Lord.'"

Returning to Constantinople in June, he plunged into the work of Bible distribution among the French and Turks.

"Constantinople, 3rd July.

"Since my last I have been exceedingly busy. My labours have been entirely amongst the French and Turks. I gave 190 Bibles in one day to the French, besides a large number of tracts and books. I wish much silence kept re-

garding my work amongst the Turks, though in some cases it has oozed out. Scarcely a day passes without some Turkish officers calling for the Bible. With Mr. M'Kutcheon I have given 300 copies already. Since my arrival here 6,600 copies of the Scriptures, in all languages, have been distributed. What a picture our poor countrymen give of Christianity here. You hardly see any one drunk but an Englishman or a Scotchman; and English oaths are the first thing many learn here. The cursed drink, how it ruins the soul, how it hinders the Lord's work. The church at home countenances it, and the ruin of thousands must lie at the door of professed Christians who support it and lend it their influence."

In the midst of his incessant and absorbing labours his own vineyard was not neglected; nor was the spiritual welfare of his friends and native place forgotten, as the following letter will show:—

"Constantinople, 5th July, 1856.

"MY DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIEND,—How quickly the time rolls past. Its tide is ceaseless. Its current is often unmarked. Its filling up as it drifts along presents a solemn history. Done with it all, how soon! Yes, done with it to enter eternity. The prospect is often solemn, and well-nigh makes, in view of it, the heart cease to beat and the soul to be still. I am a deathless being; I am marching to the world of spirits; I shall soon be unclothed. Of that world I know but little. The certainty of its being mine to spend my for ever with Jesus is my only concern. Lord, more grace! more grace! more grace! that the thought of this may swallow up all others. Make me to feel the gilded things of earth nothing, and lead me to see a glory in the things of holiness surpassing in brightness, splendour, and endurance all else besides.

"Five months have passed since I took farewell of Huntly, the scene of many a sorrow, the field of many a conflict, the spot of glimpses and of sweetest communion. When, oh when, shall the day of visitation appear? When shall the clouds break? When shall the pall of death that has hung so long above them be rolled away? Lord, soon! soon! soon! In memory I look at the blanks that

have been made—sad blanks for us certainly. One saint after another has been called away. Our little company has been lessened, and Death seems to say to the rest of us in no doubtful voice, ‘Be ready! be ready! be ready!’ Since leaving I have been preserved in deaths oft. Twice have I visited the Crimea, and endured misery enough to crush the stoutest. That dark scene I have bidden likely a last farewell. I cannot tell you my feelings as I gazed from the vessel’s deck on the sun setting behind its hills, and casting its retiring rays on its rugged shore. I had escaped. His word had had free course. I was safe. I longed for some one to help me to praise, for I could not. Alas! I still carried a diseased soul, a corrupt heart; and hour by hour well may I say, ‘If I had only hope in this life, I were of all men the most miserable.’ I need no uncommon trials to keep me lowly. I need much grace to keep me at his feet. Daily do I get deeper and deeper discoveries of my own heart, and the past seems to have only been a mere touching of the edge—a mere glance at the surface. I would often seek to hide in some desolate wilderness, and there seek to cry for the only thing I need—mercy! mercy! mercy! I hope it is better with you. How well to be at his feet. How well to be soured of earth. How well to *be shut up* to salvation through Jesus. Weak as this hope of mine often is, I cannot yield it. It has outlived many a storm; it has upheld me in furious tempests; it has twinkled in solemn, trying hours. A religion of *reality* how rare. Far clearer than before I see the current religion hollow and insecure. It is the fruit of no trial, the result of no divine fire, the product of no omnipotent power. The spark shall go out at last. Thy searching, O God, give me. Thy work let it be mine. I would seek to find my all in Thee. To find our all in God, how high the thought! how exalting the prospect! how humbling the immense distance from its possession! One day it may come. The night shall cease. What is impossible with God? Alas! that this fickle heart of mine should ever wander away. Alas! that it should ever seek at the cisterns what it can only find in the fountain. Pray for me. You can have no conception of the state of this city. I never walk its crowded streets or look on the dark cypresses marking the place of

sepulture, but I sigh and am sad, It lies heavy on me. One day it shall be the Lord's. Little is doing, and things seen personally are very different from what is seen through reports at a distance.

"To all the friends I send my Christian love and affection. Mrs. F—— seems often as if with me. Is poor M——, or I——, or B—— yet fleeing from the wrath to come? H——, M——, C——, all, I hope, remember me. How precious time is here. I often long for the rest of one hour, but I cannot find it. May the grace of the Lord Jesus rest on you. Uprightness of heart and integrity of soul I feel I need much. What a place *integrity* has in the Word! Divine leading and integrity go together. Surely, one day we shall sing in the heights of Zion. What hinders it? We deal with an unchanging God. I hope to hear soon from you. In much haste.

"Yours in Christian bonds,

"DUNCAN MATHESON."

"Constantinople, 16th July, 1856.

"I have very lately bidden the Crimea and all its many scenes and trials farewell. Scarcely one soldier, English, French, or Sardinian, is left in it. A few connected with the commissariat may be; of the line not one. The winding up was a scene of constant bustle and much hilarity. All were glad to be off, and the cheers of the soldiers were much heartier on leaving than on entering.

"I was witness of many touching scenes, but the saddest of all was the exodus of the Tartars. Such a scene I never witnessed. The old men raised their hands and wept as they took their last look from the vessel's deck, and the poor women buried their faces in their hands, scarce daring to cast a look upward. Many of our soldiers I saw deeply affected; and yet the great mass of the Tartars thanked God that they had the prospect of getting from under Russian oppression, and smoked, laughed, and chatted as if nothing was wrong. They are a poor race, and strong in their affection for Mahomedanism, much stronger than many of the Turks are. I fear a strange tale may yet have to be told of them under Turkish rule, and breathing the air, the deadly tainted air, of the Dobrudscha.

"My object in going to the Crimea was accomplished. I had been asked to come, carrying the Word of Life to the Sardinians. My arrival was known to a few, and soon it ran as wildfire through the camp. In one day seven hundred soldiers and officers visited me, asking for Bibles; and ere the last soldier had left the scene of their trials and triumphs I had given 2347 Italian Bibles, 1230 Italian Testaments, and upwards of 3400 books and tracts. I did not offer one copy, I did not present one tract. All were asked; and 250 officers of all ranks either called or wrote for Bibles. It was all done in open day. It was known to thousands. There was no disguise, and no efforts to proselytise. They asked for God's Word,—who would withhold it? They had it; and pleasing is the fact, that 18,000 copies of it have entered Piedmont during the last twelve months. Noble men, they deserve well at Britain's hand! They entered the struggle when all looked dark and gloomy. They have fought well, and sustained the honour of Italy; and their conduct has been such as to call forth universal admiration. I never met a republican in their army. All love their king and country, and long—how evidently long no other can tell—for the emancipation of fair yet down-trodden Italy.

"A story once appeared in our leading journal, copied into all the other papers, of a complaint and prohibition being made against the giving of the Bible. We believe the then correspondent (not Mr. Russell, whose accounts I have ever seen truthful and correct) was deceived. No prohibition was ever uttered; and if complaints were made, they were not heard of. The whole army were implicated. What could be done? Generously they were 'left to their own convictions, and General Della Marmora and our own generals deserve the thanks of all who love and value the Bible. To the friends in and around Huntly I send my hearty thanks for generously helping me in this work.

"I am no politician; but I cannot but feel that a solemn time is at hand regarding Italy. It is impossible to keep such a noble people long in slavery, or under the iron heel of despotism; and I know there is not one man in the Sardinian army but has left anxious for the time when he shall be called to the field to unfurl the banner, and strike the blow. They have learned much in this struggle. They

have been inured to hardship, and trained to the vicissitudes of a camp; and in the next war of Italian independence, we believe Piedmont shall be the rallying-point round which all will cluster. Statesmen stand aghast at the wrongs of Italy, and know not how to interfere. Its regeneration is a question surrounded by many difficulties; yet the solving will one day come. Naples has her crowded prisons; the fair plains of Lombardy are trodden by the Austrian vassal; Tuscany seeks to stifle the truth; Rome is kept by the soldiery of France. The question of Italy is closely connected with the East. If war should arise there, the nations of Europe will be more or less involved. Then comes the time for Russia to strike; for no one here believes her pretensions are finally laid aside, and are led to feel that Turkey, drained and inert, can form no bulwark against either Russian diplomacy or arms, if left alone in the conflict.

"No one can credit the hatred existing between the Muscovite and Turk. Their enmity to us will soon subside; for in the Crimea I had much intercourse with the Russian soldiery, having had the privilege of giving them 480 copies of the scriptures. These I found them very ready to receive, and many were the expressions of their gratitude. In few countries is the censorship of the press so strict as in Southern Russia, and there is well-nigh a total lack of literature of any kind. In the city of Simpheropol, there is not one bookseller's shop, and not a page of literature is sold. For years not a copy of the Russian scriptures has entered Odessa, and the Russian prisoners who had received them were deprived of them on landing. From all quarters they came visiting ruined Sebastopol, and it was often painful to see them looking in blank astonishment and sorrow over the place where their houses had been, and trying to fix the boundary of their lot. There seems a servility in the Russian soldier not to be found in the English or French. What may be done, now the Crimea is their own again, no one can tell. It is supposed tourists will have no liberty of inspecting, and the terms of the treaty may not be carried strictly out.

"As to Turkey, its real condition is not known. Its exchequer is exhausted—its resources unexplored—its army much wasted—its progress just where it was. They are

generally far from grateful for the help we have rendered, and feel the same contempt for the Giaour as before. The prejudices of some of the higher classes are exploded, and some have got the length of thinking attempts at reformation are necessary. At home things regarding Turkey have been much exaggerated. The promulgation of the new law has excited high hopes, and been hailed with joy, as well it may. But who is to carry it out? Turkey makes laws and then is powerless in putting them into effect. With many it is a question if she really means it; but we believe the time is drawing on for great reforms, and sweeping changes cannot be made in any nation in a day. Good laws may be made, but a people needs to be created to value them, or carry them out. Christianity for Turkey is only what can save her, and give her a place among the nations of Europe far greater than she can ever have under the reign and rule of the Koran. Serious disturbances are apprehended, but they may come to nothing; and Britain will, we hope, demand the carrying out of those reforms to obtain which the flower of our army have found graves in a foreign soil, many of our homes have been left desolate, and our resources drained.

“I have had much intercourse with the French since March here and in the Crimea, having along with a friend given them 2,000 copies of the scriptures, in very many cases asked. In some cases they came for miles for them. Glad are they to get home. The East has lost its attractions, and in their real character they look and long for something new. They have extended their influence immensely in the East, and one would often think it is dominant. No effort has been spared for its becoming so, and the study of the French language in the Turkish colleges has greatly helped it forward. A little time will be necessary ere the bearing of things can be clearly seen. Everything at present is at a standstill, and of trade there is little. On Saturday the English sovereign was less in value than it has been for years.

“I had intended to give you an account of the missionary operations here, but I have not time at present. Doors are opening on every hand. A spirit of enquiry is abroad. The sleep of many years has been broken by the stirring events

of the war. Everything is in motion. Now is the time for the Word to be scattered, and to let the nations that have so long been in darkness have the sound of the glorious gospel, whose message is 'Peace on earth, and good will to men.'

"DUNCAN MATHESON."

In Constantinople he devoted much of his time and attention to the French, by whom he was treated with the greatest consideration and kindness. When he went to Sweet Waters, where a French division was stationed, the officer in command ordered out his men, and when they had fallen into rank, the missionary was permitted to go the round and present each man with a New Testament, tract, or book.

His heart was set on doing something for the Turks. In the ancient temple of Mahomedanism chinks were opening through which silvery rays of gospel truth were quietly stealing. Matheson, having picked up a little Turkish, used to frequent the burial-places, and wait there for hours, praying that God would open some Mahomedan mourner's heart to hear the truth concerning one Jesus. Never did the prayer remain unanswered. Some sorrowing one, standing or sitting by the grave of their dearly-beloved, would listen to the stranger telling in his few blundering words about Him who is the resurrection and the life.

This indiscriminate distribution of the holy scriptures was not unattended by the evils of waste and abuse. Yet there were not wanting instances of good springing out of this very evil. A Turkish lady one day received from her grocer a parcel wrapped in a leaf of the Bible. The leaf was read, an interest in the strange book was awakened, and the lady sent a member of her household to enquire if the merchant could send her another leaf of the same kind. All that remained of the precious volume was carried home, and who can tell but the interest awakened may have deepened, under the Spirit's teaching, into faith and salvation?

An intense longing to put a copy of God's Word into the hands of a Pasha or some other Turk of influence was gratified in a curious way. One day, when distributing the scriptures at Sweet Waters, he was attacked by an infu-

riated mob of Greeks, whose religious antipathies had been thoroughly aroused. To escape their wrath he took refuge in a ship. Next day a gentleman, brother of a certain pasha, called at his lodgings to convey the regrets of the great man at the ill-treatment the missionary had received from the Greeks, at the same time requesting for the pasha's use a copy of the Word of God. My readers will not forget that at this time an Englishman was held in peculiar honour by the Turks, hence the pasha's apology. The missionary, of course, did not fail to send the book of God to the pasha, nor did he forget to praise God for this answer to his prayer.

On the Greeks he sought revenge by endeavours to disseminate among them the glad tidings of great joy that are for all people; but his success was small. One family of Greeks appeared to derive benefit from his labours; but for the most part the way was not prepared for the entrance of the Word of God among them.

As winter drew near he prosecuted his enterprise with redoubled energy. Daily did he take his stand at the Golden Horn, and distribute his books to the thousands crossing to the other side on their way to all parts of Asia. "The work gets harder," he writes. "The Turks and Greeks get more prejudiced. Yet the Lord reigneth, and all his purposes shall be accomplished. . . . How soon all wanderings here shall close. Life's sand is running fast. We hear the summons daily. Oh to hear it indeed, and prepare to meet God! I look daily forward to this, to be with Him and like Him."

"Constantinople, Nov. 5th.

"Since I last wrote you I have been very ill and confined, but I am better, and at work again. I was so weak that one day when I tried to rise I fell, and have got one eye bruised. I suppose I must have fainted."

"Constantinople, Nov. 18th.

"I feel weak indeed, and have had medical advice. There is no danger, but I must cease work, and when called to do so I am like a chained lion. The total lack of any comfort has been much against me. Many a day almost without food, and have had to be contented with

food of any kind. . . . Since March I have been enabled to distribute nearly 10,000 copies of the Scriptures—1,000 of them to Turks—and 60,000 tracts and books in all languages. The value of all has been about £1,000, and truly I may say the Lord has provided. . . . I had a letter from Piedmont lately. The work is going on nobly there. Perhaps I may get ‘The Knowledge of Sin,’ by William Burns, translated into Armenian. Dr. Dwight is examining it at present. Truly he is a godly man.”

Entirely prostrated, he lay for some time at the point of death. During this period he was tenderly watched by his friend Mr. M’Kutcheon, of the Jewish Mission, and to him, under God, he believed he owed his life. As soon as he was able to rise, he settled his affairs and left Constantinople for Egypt. From Egypt he sailed for Italy, where he visited his friends:—

“L——, Italy, 1857.

“MY DEAR SIR,—In my last I gave you some account of matters in the East, which I hope you duly received. Since leaving Constantinople I have visited Egypt, ascended its pyramids, drunk of its river, and gazed with deepest horror on the spiritual state of its inhabitants. I have heard the groans of the oppressed Sicilians, and seen the gloomy prisons of Naples, its blinded devotion and its down-trodden condition. I have walked the streets of Rome, admired its palaces, entered its catacombs, once the refuge of oppressed Christianity, and talked amidst its ruins to its enslaved people, and every day has convinced me we know little of Popery at home, and deal far too lightly with such a soul-destroying system. As it is in Italy no one can portray, no mind can fully conceive, and no language can express. Every eye is turned towards it, and every Christian heart utters the cry, ‘How long, O Lord?’ In Sicily the people sigh for freedom, but still cling to the system that has chained them. It is a fair and lovely land, but it is blighted. The number of priests in it is incredible, and the education of the young is wholly in their power. I saw here a brazen head of John the Baptist in a charger carried from door to door, every one placing money in the charger; and in many streets you meet a man demanding money, having on a box

carried for the purpose the words, 'For the souls in purgatory.' At Naples it is worse. On every church you read, 'Indulgences granted;' and you see at every step men and women prostrated before the picture of the Virgin; and at one column raised in her honour it is written, 'An indulgence of fifty days granted to all praying here.' I saw on the Grand Square more than one thousand people prostrate before the Host, and asked one what it was. To which he replied, 'It is Jesus Christ.' Terrible is the condition of Naples. Terror is marked on every face; and I could hardly get one to speak to me, because every third person in the streets is a spy. Many shops are shut, and you feel the very atmosphere oppressive; whilst cannon is to be seen pointing down its principal thoroughfares. Naples is a land where few Bibles have yet entered, and the people are deeply sunk in ignorance, and bound to Romanism more than any other people in Italy. Political and spiritual freedom are the results of Protestantism, and go linked together. Naples knows neither. . . . Bibles! there are no Bibles in Rome. I entered every bookseller's shop in it, and could only find two—one in Latin, the other in Italian. Preaching! there is none in Rome. The glory of the cross is darkened, and the way of salvation through it is never proclaimed. You have relics—Madonnas, holy altars, indulgences, by thousands, and masses for living and dead; but no pointing to the Lamb; no inviting of weary sinners; no justification by faith. Christian literature! truly you may say there is none. You have heaps of lying legends of lives of saints, of flimsy novels; but the Index Expurgatorius excludes all works worth the reading; and sprinkling with holy water is considered more safe than unloosing the mind and giving scope to the intellect. Freedom! ah, it is not in Rome. Ask the Inquisitors, and they will tell the price of seeking it, and as you ask, listen to the music coming from the Pope's dragoons. Commerce, trade, agriculture—alas! a withering light is on the land, and the fairest portion of God's earth is left untilled. So true is it, that wherever Popery has most potently maintained herself, there life has become extinct, and prosperity and morality have disappeared, as if under the influence of some mysterious malediction. The worship of Italy is the worship of Mary—pictures of Mary—statues

of Mary—churches to Mary—columns to Mary—songs to Mary—prayers to Mary, in every spot. Idolatry! where is it, if you see it not in Rome? Go to the church of Ara Coeli, and there you will see a small image of Jesus, with many kissing its feet, and crossing themselves before it. Wait for a little. The priests take it up, enter a coach, and drive—that the sight of it may cure some dying person! Yes. Startle not. The priests told us it had performed many miracles; and the people prostrating themselves before it is a proof that they believe it. Common is it to see written over many altars—‘Specially privileged;’ ‘For the dead;’ ‘Every mass said at this altar frees a soul from purgatory.’ And in large gilded letters you often read—‘Plenary indulgences granted by special favour of the Pope.’ Where is the Luther to cry with trumpet-tongue, and proclaim the vicious nature of such Pagan Christianity to its blinded devotees, pointing them only to Him who is the Way, the Truth, the Life? Sadly deserted are the churches of Rome, and most of the educated have become infidels. They asked for bread, but got a stone. The craving for something better could not be met; for the gospel was buried, and Christ was not named. It is the natural result of such training, and sad is the account to be rendered by the authors of it. Pleasing was it to go from all this to the gloomy catacombs, and see engraved tombs of the early Christians—the calm, sublime hopes which they enjoyed! Simple are the inscriptions, yet what so cheering?—‘In Peace;’ ‘In Christ.’ Rome has nothing there to favour one of her doctrines. They knew them not.

“Need I tell you, Italy knows no Sabbaths. Feast-days have more authority; and the people look astonished when you tell them God has commanded all his day to be kept holy. It is their day of greatest enjoyment. Every theatre is opened in Rome; and if any one had witnessed the Sabbaths of the Carnivals now ended, they would go home resolved to keep it inviolate, and be led to bless God they lived in a land where in great measure the keeping of the Sabbath is known. In this matter—and it is well it should be known—the Protestants on the Continent—ministers and people, are very lax. They do not look on it with the same sacredness that we do. The evil effects of such views daily

appear, and almost universally our own countrymen leave keeping of Sabbaths at home. One fact is worth mentioning: I have never yet seen one in Italy drunk, and during the days of the Carnival thousands met every day.

“And now you will be ready to ask, What is doing in Italy for the spread of the truth, and how does the work succeed? The question, for many reasons, is difficult to answer. I can say nothing of Rome, but that I believe many of the people would hail the Bible, if it were put within their reach. Throughout all Italy there is a preparation in the people’s minds for this, and in many instances far, far more. They desire to see the Book which is kept from them. Tens of thousands of them have their eyes open to the evil of Papacy. This is well, but it goes no farther. In the case of thousands—yea, millions, attachment to the Romish religion, if not to Pope and priests, is as strong as ever. Even in Piedmont this is the case; and in the case of others, here and there saving conversion has followed the reading of the Word through the divine blessing. This is especially true of Tuscany, where every effort is made to keep it from them, and where the surveillance is stricter—much stricter than ever it was before. Tuscany is the tool of Austria, and yet the work goes on the more it is tried to crush it, and souls are born to God. Here and there small companies meet for worship, and in wondrous ways the truth finds entrance. Many are Protestants in name, though not apparently savingly converted; but there are undoubted trophies of grace, and much, very much, to cheer and encourage to prayer. I have no hesitation in saying, if liberty were granted, thousands, many thousands, would hail the gospel, and the demand for the Word would be so great it could hardly be supplied. In Piedmont—the only free country in Italy, and on which the hearts and affections of so many are set—the work goes on in some places rapidly. We must now separate the political from the spiritual. One party—the greatest—seek political freedom, and others seek to know the truth. A remarkable advance has been made. The Word is finding entrance by thousands, and is read. Men here and there, knowing the truth themselves, are boldly declaring it, and the Lord is giving testimony to the Word of his grace. One case has reached us of the Bible

given in the Crimea having been blessed. A soldier brought one home, and gave it to a farmer near A——. He began to read it with his wife and family, and all became deeply interested. His neighbours also came to hear it read, and joined with the farmer and his family in sending for a Waldensian Evangelist; and thus a small church is formed in the midst of a dark corner of Piedmont, which may yet extend wider and wider, till many be embraced in its fold. I do not know what may be the future of Italy. I cannot say how soon revolution may shake it from one end to another. I believe it is not far distant. Endurance has its limits, and men may be made slaves only for a time. The light is beginning again to rise on it. Its progress we should watch with fear and trembling, being neither too sanguine nor depressed. We cannot estimate the value of one soul. God has lighted a light—shaded for a time it may be—but out it cannot be put, neither by popes nor princes—neither by the fires of martyrdom nor the bolts of a prison. Our duty is clear, our path open, our command plain. Prayer, much prayer, must be made, and specially for God to raise up men fitted to carry on his work, and in their devoted, earnest, holy lives to exemplify the doctrines they teach. We know his truth shall triumph, and triumph gloriously, and that even now the first streaks of light on the horizon are but the prelude of the full flood of light which shall yet arise on this sin-blighted world.

“Ever your affectionate friend,

“Mr. P. Drummond.”

“DUNCAN MATHESON.

“Turin, March 13th.

“I have not had a minute to write you till now, for I have been intensely occupied. I arrived at Genoa on the 6th, and remained three days. I could hardly walk a step without soldiers running and saluting me, &c. I had much joy in the presence of some of them, and on meeting some English friends. On Sabbath I addressed a meeting in the Free Church, and felt greatly assisted. On Monday I came here, and immediately started for the Waldensian valleys. Yes, I have seen them, and truly every spot is full of interest. At La Tor I visited the college, church, and schools. What a simple, intelligent people! How can I

tell you of the scenes here! It is like the march of a conqueror. I cannot move a step without being accosted. Sixty soldiers have been round me in a circle at once. Hundreds have shaken hands with me. Poor fellows! they are deeply, deeply grateful. I feel a deep, very deep, interest in them. To-day I have been in the Parliament House with Mr. Milan, the Vaudois deputy, and was much and deeply interested. Truly freedom is here. Do forgive my brevity. Every moment is occupied. I was in Florence since writing you, and escaped, though carrying eight copies of the Word into it. This is a wonderful field, and I expect much to be done here. The Lord has helped me to set many things in motion since my arrival. To Him be the praise."

In March, 1857, he brought his stay in Italy to a close. This visit was in reality the accomplishment of a great Christian work. He had been enabled to make his mark on a vast number of the Italian officers and soldiers. "The Sardinians' Friend" is not yet forgotten; and, while his memory is treasured in many a brave heart, there can hardly be a doubt that he was the divinely-chosen instrument of enshrining the Word of God in the affections of thousands who, but for his gigantic exertions, would have returned to their native land to live and die in worse than Egyptian darkness. That the fruit of this wide and prayerful sowing of the seed, at the first blush of Italy's spring, will be glory to God in the salvation of many souls we cannot but believe.

Passing rapidly through France, he reached home ere yet the sun of the northern summer had waxed hot. To rest, to tell his story, and prepare for new labours, needed a breathing-time.

CHAPTER VI.

DAYS OF REVIVAL.



THIS native air speedily restored his health. Not one day was wasted in needless rest. Often at this period did he at public meetings tell his Crimean story amidst torrents of tears; but he always took care, when the fountains of emotion were stirred, to cast the

bread of truth upon the waters, in the hope of finding it after many days. Invited by the minister of the Free Church at Insch, he occupied the pulpit for the first time. Here he held the first enquirers' meeting, which was attended by a few, and among the rest an old man who said, "I've come that ye may search me weel. Oh, dinna scruple to try me, as it wad be a fearfu' thing to be deceived for eternity. Noo, sir, begin." "John," said the evangelist, "do you love the Lord Jesus?" "I dinna doot that," was the reply, "but I wad like mair." The old disciple was still enquiring. During his three months' labour at Insch several persons were awakened. One of these afterwards became an elder in a Free Church, and another, a young woman, became the wife of a missionary, and was instrumental in winning souls.

In October, 1857, he went to labour as an evangelist in Whitehaven, at the request of a minister of the Church of England, who was desirous of promoting the spiritual welfare of his native place. He found the soil of Cumberland stiff; but his labours were not wholly in vain. It was a sowing-time rather than a harvest. Then he began to preach every day, a practice he followed throughout the rest of his active ministry. "To this place," he says in a letter, "I have almost done my duty. Surely, if I go home I shall get a little rest. *Rest* did I say? Nay, truly, whilst health is granted. The days pass swiftly. Soon all will be gone. Since I came here I have not got half-an-hour to take my dinner at a time, and the door is widening on every hand."

Here he resorted again to the press. When lying at the point of death in the East, he had prayed that ten years might be added to his life, and vowed that if spared he would publish a testimony for Christ. The prayer was answered, and the vow duly performed. The testimony for Jesus took the form of a little monthly periodical, which he entitled, "The Herald of Mercy." After much prayer he issued the first number at the close of 1857. "I had no money to advertise it with," he tells, "but I trusted in God, and cried to Him to spread and bless it for his own glory." Under his editorship it held on its way till it reached a circulation of 32,000 a month. It was declared by many to

have been the herald of mercy to their souls. Its aim was the awakening and conversion of sinners. It was not designed or specially adapted for the edification of saints, excepting so far as it kept before the eye of believers the worth of souls and the realities of the eternal world. Never did the trumpet give a more certain sound than in the mouth of "The Herald of Mercy." It recognised nothing on earth but *souls*: souls in sin, and souls in Christ: souls going to heaven, and souls going to hell. Every article, paragraph, and sentence, original or selected, bore directly and plainly on the great truths—ruin, regeneration, and redemption. The little messenger was owned of God, as a few facts will show.

A stranger came to Mr. Matheson one day in Crieff, and asked him if he remembered a "Herald of Mercy" with an article headed, "Quench not the Spirit." "That," said he, "was the means of my conversion."

An English lady, resident in Constantinople, for whose spiritual welfare much had been done in vain, received from a friend a copy of the "Herald." The reading of it resulted in her conversion.

A tradesman in Berwickshire one day finding a fragment of paper on the floor, picked it up, and as a matter of curiosity, began to read. It proved to be part of the "Herald of Mercy," being a brief article, headed, "Are you converted?" It was an arrow from the King's own bow. Conversion followed.

Two young men stood side by side at an open-air meeting. One of them held in his hand a copy of "Special Herald," with hymns; but while they sang the eye of his companion wandered from the verses to a little paragraph put in to fill a vacant corner. It was enough: both eye and heart were fixed. The little article spoke with divine power, and brought him to Jesus' feet. The young man is now a minister of the gospel.

A herd-boy was sitting at the wayside, when some one passing put a "Herald of Mercy" into his hand. As he tended the cattle he read, was awakened, and brought to Christ. He is now known as a devoted follower of Christ.

Invited by Lady Pirrie, he went to Maivern in the autumn of 1858, and laboured there for a short time. Here on the

hill-side he held his first open-air meeting, and felt he received a special call to this kind of work in the blessing that attended the service. Henceforth he gave himself to preaching in the open air. By day, by night, beneath the summer sun, out in the drenching rain or piercing cold of winter, in the remote glen amidst the bleating of the sheep, at the sea-side, where the singing of David's psalms mingles with the still more ancient harmonies of the great ocean, on the crowded street, in the noisy fair, beneath the shadow of the scaffold, in the face of the raging mob—everywhere, in short, as far as in him lay, he strove to preach Christ to perishing men. In this way his voice reached many who otherwise would never have heard the glad tidings of salvation.

From Malvern he retraced his steps to Cumberland, and for a while laboured at Workington. Here by invitation of the people he occupied the pulpit of the Presbyterian Church, and combined the offices of pastor and evangelist. His preaching excited no ordinary interest. Crowds flocked to hear him, and not a few were impressed.

On February 2nd, 1859, he was married at Weston-super-Mare to Miss Mary Milne, a Christian lady whom he ever regarded as an invaluable gift bestowed upon him in answer to prayer. Not one day was withdrawn from labour. Exuberantly social and tenderly affectionate though he was, the winning of souls was to him infinitely more than the most endearing relationship or the most hallowed earthly joy. "We'll get settled up yonder in the Father's house," he said; "meanwhile let us work and win souls."

In the spring of 1859 Mr. Matheson returned to Scotland, and took up his residence in the city of Aberdeen. The great religious awakening of that period was just beginning. Tidings of the work of grace in America and Ireland stirred the hearts of Christians, and many were in expectation of a similar blessing. The spirit of grace and supplication was poured down, and many a blessed scene was now witnessed. The winter was indeed past, and the time of the singing of birds was come. The beginning and progress of the work were everywhere characterized by a real faith in the efficacy of prayer, and the power that attended the testimony of Christians to Christ. In answer to prayer the treasured petitions of years seemed to be granted in

one day. The simplest utterances of even babes in Christ were instrumental in converting sinners. In fact, the testifying of believers and its effect was a marked feature of the work. In *teaching*, the truth is set forth simply on its own merits. In *preaching*, there is an authoritative, herald-like proclamation of the Gospel in the King's name. In *testifying*, the speaker bears witness to matters of fact of which he is personally cognizant. The best preacher, doubtless, is teacher, herald, and witness all in one. But *testifying* has its place and power. Many were saying, "Christ is dead: Christianity is dead," when suddenly thousands arose, and with one voice declared, "Christ is not dead. He lives, and the proof is this, He has saved us: He has raised to a new life us who were dead in trespasses and sins." "The Lord gave the word, and great was the company of those that published it."

It is worthy of remark that the work began, at least in its more striking manifestations, in the fishing village of Ferryden, and quickly extended to the numerous little towns that dot the north-eastern coast. It reminded many of the beginning of the Lord's ministry in the fishing villages of Galilee; and the recent gracious visit of the Lord Jesus to our own Galilean regions seemed to some like the return of an old love.

In Aberdeen Mr. Matheson occupied the pulpit of Blackfriars Street Independent Chapel. Joining his friends, Mr. Radcliffe and Mr. Campbell (minister of Free North Church), he threw himself heartily into the work. Not satisfied with ordinary effort, they set themselves to carry the war into the very camp of the enemy by open-air services in the streets and elsewhere. In writing to a friend, he says:—

"I have only time for a few words, and my object in writing is specially to ask your prayers that at this time the Lord may greatly bless me in the ingathering of souls. Yesterday was one of the most remarkable days I have spent in my life. Mr. F——, the godly man who brought me to Aberdeen, was well yesterday morning. He went at two o'clock to the meeting in the County Buildings; read 16th of John, sang a psalm, engaged in prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit, sat down, cast his eyes to heaven, gave a deep sigh, and in a moment his spirit was with

Jesus whom he loved. At eight o'clock Mr. Campbell and I preached to thousands in the open air. What a night ! We had over and over again to preach. The crowds had to be divided, for they were too large. We could not till nearly eleven o'clock get away from the awakened. Mr. Radcliffe was unable to speak. Pray, pray for us. The Lord is doing great things. I believe almost every time one speaks souls are brought to Christ. Pray for me—for humility. The Lord bless you. I am weary.

"Yours in Him,

"DUNCAN MATHESON."

Speaking of the work of grace in Aberdeen, in a letter of date 17th August, 1859, he says :—

"After a residence of nearly five months in this city, and having come in contact with the work in all its phases, I have no hesitation in saying that a great and glorious work of grace has been felt here, and that it is still going on. It is impossible to estimate its extent, or gather up one-half of the results. More, far more, has been done than is apparent ; and yet it is a fact that numbers have been more or less influenced by the truth, and that many, very many, manifestly have been brought to Christ. There can be no doubt of this, and as yet I have not met one case of any truly awakened returning to the world. The Lord has given a visible stamp to not a few, and the zeal, love, affection, prayerfulness, and humility of many of the young converts is remarkable. I never during my life saw more deep concern for souls than I have seen here, and the close clinging to each other, though in different churches, is refreshing—most refreshing. Groups of the young are to be found here and there throughout the whole city meeting for prayer ; and one thing has struck me almost more than anything—the holy boldness in confessing Christ, and acknowledging what He has done for their souls. Another striking thing is this, that few have found Christ themselves, but they have been instrumental in the awakening of others. Many instances of this have come under my notice. A leading feature in the prayers of the young converts is the prayer offered up for the Christian ministry. One would often think they were burdened with the care of the ministry ; and a high, deep respect for the ministers of the gospel,

in so far as they are owned of God and devoted to his work, is manifest. We have had the revival, and the fruits are apparent to all who have mingled in the work. Often has it pained us, many going away and saying, 'I saw none.' Nay, and how could they, if they did not go where it was, and if they did not ask those who do know it?

"The grace of God has been much displayed in not a few instances that have come under our notice, of parties coming to spend a Sabbath in the city, going away to their homes deeply awakened, or rejoicing in Jesus, and becoming centres of blessing where they lived. I have passed through many parishes in the county, and found here and there anxious souls; and one thing is undeniable, that never was there a time when so many were thirsting for the Word, and that where ministers have taken advantage of this, and entered with intensity into this new state of things, there a blessing has descended. At Chapel of Garioch, Banchory, &c., the Lord has been working, but with much power at Chapel of Garioch; and I believe that there is not a parish around it but has its awakened ones. The truth that above all others seems to be owned is—'You are lost. A Saviour has been provided. It is your duty to accept Him *now*.' Ruin by the fall, righteousness by Christ, and regeneration only by the Holy Ghost, are the leading truths of every address. They are uttered in much simplicity, from loving hearts (I speak of Mr. Radcliffe and the ministers well known engaged in the work), and in much dependence on the Holy Ghost, and the blessing does descend. We can convince no one if they will not believe. Hearts leap for joy, and songs of holy triumph are sung. The Spirit is breathing; the Holy Ghost is working; the gale is blowing; the tide has risen and is still rising. Blessed they that take advantage of it, and girding themselves for the battles of the Lord, go forth to preach Christ,

"'As dying men unto dying men.'

But how sad to awake and find the opportunity gone, and hear, in the looks of hardened sinners, powerless sermons, and unheeded warnings, the voice, deep and solemn—'*Thou hadst a day*.' God bless you evermore."

From Aberdeen he went frequently to the country, and

found many of the rural parishes awakening as out of a deep sleep. Let us follow him to two or three places of interest. An awakening took place in the Free Church of Garioch in August, 1859. Mr. Matheson was present when the work began. "The prominent characteristic which ever attracted most our love for Mr. Matheson," writes Mrs. Bain, wife of the esteemed minister, "was his devoted and continual watching and working for the salvation of souls. I noticed this at my first meeting with him, which occurred in a stage-coach about 1848, on which occasion I was greatly refreshed while listening to a conversation in which I found my two fellow-travellers engaged when I entered the coach. One, an elderly man, was making objections to the doctrine of sovereign grace. The other, a young man, although evidently suffering under severe toothache, was using the opportunity to plead for truth wisely and lovingly. I felt so interested as to be constrained to enquire on reaching our journey's end after his name, and found it was Duncan Matheson, then said to be a stonecutter, but evidently being prepared to use skilfully the hammer of the Word of God in polishing living stones for the great temple. Some years afterwards, being employed in missionary work in and around Huntly, he was asked to address a meeting here, which, I think, was almost the first of his evangelistic labours beyond his native district. From that occasion onward to his last visit, after his illness was far advanced, many were his kind and stirring visits to us and among us, and many have cause to bless God for them.

"Mr. Matheson was engaged to preach here on the evening of August 4th, 1859, Mr. Bain being then in Ireland, drawn over by the great revival there. Some days before, I received an intimation from Mr. Radcliffe of his willingness to come and address our people, and spend some time here, which being accepted, Mr. Matheson's previous engagement proved a very gracious arrangement in providence for leading him to be present, and giving his most valuable assistance on that remarkable night of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the people gathered from the surrounding district, his previous knowledge of not a few of them giving him an advantage in dealing with the many souls awakened on that memorable occasion.

"After the market-preaching began, Mr. Matheson came to us for several years on the Sabbath nearest the Whitsunday and Martinmas terms. These visits were looked forward to with desire, and much prized by our people. On one of these Sabbaths the power of God was manifest upon the souls of many, especially in the afternoon. Mr. Bain being absent, I was called out of church after the close of the first service, and while a prolonged meeting was being held on account of the agitated state of some young persons. I found at the church door a lad who had long been in my Sabbath Bible-class, and who up to the morning of that day had been, as far as I could see, entirely hard and careless, answering questions with perfect ease and indifference, so that I found it necessary, in order to keep him in his own place, to frame questions of some difficulty for him. My amazement was great to see his usually hard face pale, his whole frame trembling. And when I asked the cause, he could only gasp, 'My sins! my sins!' I brought him and his sister, also awakened, to the Manse, and advised them, after other efforts to help them, to cry to God. 'I cannot pray,' he said, in great distress. I left them a little, and then returned, when I found him wrestling in an agonizing way to find the words which were gradually coming out of his lips. Mr. Matheson took much interest in this case, which, after some time of deep distress, appeared to issue in a new birth and consistent profession. The young man having left this neighbourhood, I have not seen him for several years.

"Mr. Matheson's influence over the people here was great, as may be judged from the fact that, after the revival in 1859-60, he one day threw out while preaching a suggestion that the young men of our congregation should agree to support a native Chinese evangelist under Mr. Wm. Burns. A few took up the idea, and ever since the yearly salary has been gathered, although he who suggested and some who began the work now rest from their labours.

"Mr. Matheson's preaching was wonderfully attractive in most places to some whose position and previous training would not have led one to expect a Scottish lay-evangelist to be listened to with pleasure. But I believe the secret of his power lay in his deep heart-yearning over souls, and

dealing with God in secret for them in connexion with the sanctified wisdom and tact with which the Master gifted him as a fisher of men.

“He was engaged in this work in season and out of season, in secret and in public. On one occasion, while walking alone in this neighbourhood, a lady passed on horseback, whose general bearing and talents had led him to feel interested in her while yet a stranger to saving grace. He retired into a wood, then and there knelt down, and cried to God for her conversion; and I doubt not this was one of the links in the appointed chain of circumstances by which ere long she was drawn by the cords of divine love to God, and became for a few years, till called to the home above, a bright Christian.”

Towards the close of 1859 he began to extend his evangelistic itineracy to Banffshire, preaching for the most part in the towns and villages along the coast. His labours were specially blessed in the burgh and seaport of Cullen. This little town is situated on the brow of a hill looking full in the face the blue waters of the Northern Sea, where it begins to narrow into the beautiful Frith of Moray, whose ample tide is bounded on the southern shore by wild, picturesque, and caverned rocks; whilst the lofty mountains of Sutherland and Caithness rise far upon the deep, like giant warders of the northern coast. Beneath the burgh proper lies the fishing village in a tumult of houses upon the beach, where the storm often breaks with Arctic fury, casting clouds of spray high into the air, and sometimes invading the cottages that line the shore.

Early in 1860 the whole place was moved as by an earthquake. Fear took hold on the sinners in Zion; trembling seized the hypocrites. Careless ones, whose shadow had not darkened the door of God's house for many years, found their way to church or chapel; and even worldly men talked to one another about the great question upon the streets. At first the awful shadow of an angry God coming to judgment fell on many, and it seemed as if there was one dead in every house. Awakening was followed by conversion. The thunder of Sinai gave way to the peaceful sunshine of Calvary. Christians who had never known the liberty of the gospel were suddenly delivered from the spirit

of bondage, and ushered into the joyful assurance of acceptance in the Beloved.

Our evangelist visited Cullen just as the work of grace was becoming manifest, and preached frequently in the Free and Independent churches, receiving from the pastors a cordial welcome. On one memorable night he preached to a crowded congregation in the Free Church. The subject of his discourse was "The Barren Fig-tree." From the beginning of the service a deep solemnity rested on the people, and the minds of many were in a state of strange expectancy. Unveiling the truth, the preacher describes a community favoured with the light and privileges of the gospel. Privilege after privilege is enjoyed. Sabbath follows Sabbath in peaceful succession. Opportunity after opportunity occurs, and sermon on sermon. Mercy presses on the heels of mercy, like the bright days of summer chasing time to its wintry close. The sharp dispensations of the providential pruning-knife come again and again. But all is in vain. The sunshine and the rain have been to no purpose; the digging and the dunging have been in vain. The Father's love has been to them as nought. The blood of the Son has been despised. The grace of the Spirit has brought forth no fruit in them. Forbearance and intercession have yielded no result but failure. After the resources of the Godhead in the gospel of Christ, what then? The people know that He is drawing their portrait with unmistakable resemblance. Feeling they are found out among the trees of the garden, they tremble and listen with breathless attention. The sonorous voice of the preacher grows thrillingly solemn and tender as he proceeds, till at length he pours out his last warning in a torrent of compassionate feeling. His eye glances with an awful light, as if he is looking into eternity, while he lifts his hands and pronounces the sentence with a mighty and judgment-like voice, "Cut it down; why cumbereth it any longer the ground?" Never did woodman aim a better stroke. God is in the Word. Old rotten trunks are crashing beneath the blow. One and another are saying with irrepressible alarm, "It is I! it is I! God be merciful to my soul!" The results are with Him who knoweth all things; but there is reason to believe that some of the audience will remember that

night and the felling of the barren fig-tree amidst the songs and joys of eternity.

On another memorable occasion he preached in the Independent Chapel. The little meeting-house is crowded to the door. The night is intensely cold and dark. The frost having rendered the ordinary lights unavailable, the darkness is made visible by a single candle, which the preacher holds in his hand. His text is "Remember Lot's wife." The narrative receives a graphic handling. The clear sky of early morn suddenly darkens, a cloud of appalling blackness throws the shadow of approaching judgment upon the cities of the plain. Then a gleam of more than lightning vividness kindles all the air, a whirlwind of fire sweeps down upon Sodom and wraps its four corners, its every street and suburb, its every house and chamber, its every man and woman, in the very winding-sheet of hell. Ah! now the inhabitants of the doomed city wake to find that their damnation slumbereth not. But a little band of four escapes. An angelic saviour leads them on. Well may they hasten, for the devouring fire sweeps fast along the plain. One of the four lingers, only a little; but a little is at this awful moment decisive of much. God's wrath is abroad. Is this a time to trifle? The fiery tempest suddenly closes her round, and there she stands under an eternal arrest, a pillar of salt. Some such picture is before the eye of the people's imagination as the preacher proceeds to the more important part of his discourse—its application to the consciences of the hearers. God enters by little, lowly doors into men's hearts. The Spirit uses little things to make and deepen impressions of the unseen and the eternal. The darkness of the place; the solitary candle throwing a dim, pale light on the preacher's countenance, and giving it a strange, weird look; the deep silence, broken only by a sigh or a sob, and the solemn tones of a voice speaking, as it were, out of the invisible, and warning every trifler with the soul and with God to "remember Lot's wife," conspired, in the hand of the Holy Spirit, to bring about one of those supreme moments of crisis when souls must and do decide their destiny for eternal weal or eternal woe.

Our evangelist made his mark on the young men of the town. His broad, free, genial manners captivated their

hearts; his talents, magnanimity, and uprightness commanded their respect. Many of them were converted at this time; and it was pleasing to see the finest youths of the place sitting in a company round about their father in the faith, and receiving his counsels as from an angel of God. For the young men he had a peculiar love: they were his joy, and as his very life. He cared for their interests as a father for his children, and cherished them as a nurse cherishes a babe. He guided them with skill, warning them against the errors of his own early Christian days; and having won their confidence, he strove to lead them to the highest idea of the life of faith. In particular, he ever urged upon them entire consecration. "Be out and out for Christ," he would say; "nail your colours to the mast; labour for God, and live for eternity." In this way he succeeded in stamping upon them the impress of his own decided and energetic character, and through the grace given him inspired them with an intense longing to win souls. One of them is now an ordained missionary in China; another labours in Turkey; a third preaches the gospel at home; a fourth is preparing to take the field as a medical missionary; and others are occupying their talent in the quiet corners of the vineyard.

An instance of the way in which the fire was then spreading may be here given. James Wilson, a native of Cullen, and an accomplished classical scholar, was at that time master of a school at Aberfeldy, in Perthshire. Hearing of the work of grace in his native town, he was deeply moved. Previous to this he had regarded earnestness in religion as a mere extravagance; but now "the name to live whilst dead" satisfied him no longer. The work of God began in the village, and the minister of the Free Church was frequently assisted by Mr. Matheson. The teacher was led to take a decided stand for Christ, and thenceforth all his learning and influence were given to the work of the Lord. His school became a nursery for the church and the divinity hall. Remarkable success attended his labours among the youths, some of whom, after a brilliant academic career, have entered on the work of the ministry with much promise of usefulness. The course of the devoted teacher was terminated by an early translation to glory.

Cullen lay much on the heart of the evangelist. For years he continued to visit it, labouring to win its inhabitants to Christ. On his way thither many a weary mile did he trudge, often amidst the rains and snows of winter, receiving no pay and seeking no reward but "souls." Divining his motives, the shrewd fishermen said, "That man fishes by the cran;" that is to say, he is no mere hireling: he labours not for a comfortable living, but finds his reward in the number of souls saved. Often was his stentorian voice heard ringing from the centre of the town to its circumference in the quiet of the evening, when the deepening shades added solemnity to the preacher's word; and strong men were known to tremble at their own fireside as the question fell upon their unwilling ears, "Who shall stand before this holy Lord God?"

In most of the villages that stud the Banffshire coast, a stranger in those days had but to signify his willingness to preach the gospel, when suddenly, as if by magic, the whole population, men, women, and children, would assemble to hear the Word of God. To see the great crowd kneeling reverently on the grass amidst the deepest silence broken only by a groan, a sob, a loud cry for mercy, to be followed by fond, enthusiastic demonstrations of love and hearty songs of praise, characteristic of these impulsive children of the sea, was a sight impressive beyond description, and never to be forgotten. From such scenes Duncan Matheson, like one refreshed with the new wine of the kingdom, was wont to come away singing his favourite Psalm—

"When Zion's bondage God turned back,
Like men that dreamed were we;
Then filled with laughter was our mouth,
Our tongue with melody."

The landward parishes were not overlooked by the great Redeemer as He marched along the sea-coast in glorious majesty: from his bountiful hand the blessings of his grace were now being scattered far and wide. The reapers on the field, from the master to the gleaner, were known to lay aside at noonday the urgent labours of the harvest to attend to the more pressing business of the soul. Jesus was gathering golden sheaves into his garner. Matheson at this period, strong to reap rather than patient to sow, lent his powerful

aid in every place. Few in all that region missed hearing the jubilant voice of our sturdy reaper, and seeing the gleam of his sharp sickle among the yellow corn. Prompt in word and deed, skilful above most men to strike the iron while it was hot, brooking no restraints of mere policy or empty form, and impetuous almost beyond measure, he was in his proper character an Arab in the service of the King. Hungering after great results, having capacity for work and fatigue enough for two men, and withal possessing that rare and dangerous power of will by which strong souls can indefinitely postpone the season of rest, the unwearied spirit keeping the wearied flesh up to its own high mark, our evangelist moved from one place to another with the rapidity of a courier in the crisis of battle. Seizing the opportunities that will not tarry for the timid or the too cautious, he launched on the full tide when others were laying down canons for discussing the conditions of its ebb and flow. The very air seemed full of elements deeply solemn and heart-touching. A divine presence rested everywhere, and men were compelled for a time to breathe the atmosphere of eternity. Doors that might soon close were opening on every side, and the energetic lay-preacher was not slow to enter in. Pushing along the coast as far north as Moray and Nairn, he bent his steps into the interior, and visited Dufftown, Tomintoul, and Braemar. Sweeping southward to the counties of Forfar and Perth, he gradually extended his circuit until it embraced the whole country from John o' Groat's to the English border. To follow him into every town and parish is impossible : we can only seize on a few points.

In the gracious visitations of this period Dundee was not passed by. In the many evangelistic services then held in this town Mr. Matheson lent frequent and effective aid. He preached in churches of various denominations, and his voice was often heard in the open air. One winter he remained here three months, every day and night of which was spent in exhausting but fruitful toil. One Sabbath evening, early in 1860, he addressed a crowded congregation in Hilltown Church. An unwonted solemnity, deepening as the service proceeded into a feeling of awe, seemed to rest on the audience. The preacher discoursed from Matthew

xxv. 46: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." In words most telling and pictures most vivid he described the sinner's going away—away from the fair scenes of nature, from the warbling of the birds and the murmur of the brooks, from the smiling of the summer sun and the rich glow of autumn—away from every lovely sight and every pleasant sound—away from friends and home and social joys, of everything dear to the heart of man upon the earth—away from the peaceful Sabbath, with its hallowed services and its heavenly calm, to hear the sound of the Sabbath bell and the song of praise no more for ever—away from the affectionate efforts and touching appeals of the faithful preacher, and from the sympathies and prayers of Christian friends—away from the Bible, with its beautiful stories, its comforting promises, and its heavenly truths, like God's windows, letting down light upon a dark world—away from all the peace and purity and hope of the gospel—away from God, whose mercy they reject, for ever—away from Jesus, whose blood they trample beneath their feet—away from the gracious Spirit to whom they have done so great despite—away from all joy and blessing and good, for evermore. To render the truths more vivid, he described a heart-melting scene he had witnessed in the East in the departure of a weeping crowd of Circassian exiles, whose loud and agonizing wail told the love they bore to their fatherland, from which they were being driven by the scourge of war. As he went on in his own pathetic manner, with a certain grandly plaintive music as of eternity in his voice, to describe the departure of the woe-stricken exiles of sin and despair into the blackness of darkness for ever, speaking as feelingly as if he saw them disappearing in that dismal and unknown night, the heavy sigh, the stifled sob, and the pallor on many a face, revealed the all but uncontrollable emotion of the people. At the close of the service the session and vestry were crowded with the awakened. The place was a Bochim. The first person that obtained deliverance started up, saying, "I have found Him! I have found Him! I never saw the way before!" and began to praise and glorify God. This only pierced the hearts of the others with a keener sorrow. Fearing lest they should be left in their sins, they began to charge them-

selves with unpardonable hardness of heart, and to prostrate themselves before God in the most affecting manner. To one after another came peace and joy in believing, and quickly the weeping was changed into songs of praise. Such scenes as these were afterwards renewed with blessed frequency ; and the gracious character of the work came out in holy lives, patient sufferings, and triumphant deaths.

In the autumn of the same year open-air meetings were held in the Barrack Park in this town. On the second day several of the ministers and others, fearing lest there should be no blessing, retired, on the suggestion of Matheson, in great heaviness of spirit to pray. Kneeling on the grass, we continued in intercession for nearly two hours. It was one of those seasons of agonizing prayer which seem ever to precede a remarkable display of Divine grace. It was the slumbering spouse arousing herself with painful effort at the call of her Lord ; the laborious undoing of the bars of the everlasting gates to let the King of glory in. By the end of the praying the darkened sky began to pour down torrents of rain, and the mass of the people, with most of the speakers, were dispersed. The voice of Duncan Matheson was heard calling aloud, "Perhaps God is trying us by the rain ; let us wait a little." Gideon's three hundred remained, and continued in prayer and praise. Mr. Campbell (Aberdeen), whose labours were so signally owned amongst us at that time, together with his friend our evangelist, and another, leading the services amidst descending torrents. Just as the sun was beginning to shine out again and the rain was ceasing, an extraordinary sense of the Divine Presence fell upon the whole assembly. Suddenly the Christians were filled with great joy. Simultaneously many of the anxious found the Lord, and began to break forth in songs of praise. Every one began to speak to his neighbour of the Saviour he was seeking or the Saviour he had found. On passing through the whole company, we did not find one who was not either rejoicing in Christ or seeking Him with intense earnestness. The cloud of glory rested there for a season ; and no visible signs or miraculous gifts could have added to the blessed consciousness and most veritable certainty of the immediate presence and gracious working of God. Till memory fails or the

more "excellent glory" of the unveiled face of Immanuel obliterates the remembrance of faith's brightest visions on earth, it is impossible for us to forget the awful nearness of God at that time, the overpowering sense of blended majesty, love, and holiness, the solemn gladness, and the soft, pure radiance of a Redeemer's face that chased the dark shadows of doubt and sin away from many a soul. "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; . . . and of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." Many of the believers, if not all, were then sealed anew, and they began henceforth to testify to the grace of God with great freedom and boldness. Some Christians who had never known assurance were then ushered into the full light of the gospel; their bonds were loosed, and they entered into the liberty of the sons of God. Many sought and found the Lord upon the spot. The door of salvation then seemed to be peculiarly near, easy of entrance, and inviting. Whilst you were praying with an enquirer, he would break out, "Oh, I have found Him!" or "I see! I see!" And then followed the new song. Often, as we sung the opening verses of the fortieth Psalm, the light broke in upon the distressed soul, and peace followed.

After this the work went on prosperously; numbers were found awakened at the close of every meeting. Many thousands attended the open-air services, and great power accompanied the word. The way in which many were converted stamped the movement as the work of the Holy Spirit. A young man entered a church from sheer curiosity, and stood near the door in order that he might the more conveniently retire if aught should offend his ear. He heard the text, and heard no more. That led to his conversion. Another young man was returning from business one evening, when a serious thought took hold of him. Entering his room, he opened the New Testament at the tenth chapter of the gospel according to John. "Seeing the open door," he said, "I slipped in, and now I find Jesus to be the Way." "When I saw that my sister was so changed and so happy," said another, "I was afraid lest I should be left, and in my alarm I sought the Lord and found Him." "One shall be taken, and another shall be

left," was a preacher's text at an open-air meeting. A woman whose husband had been recently converted hearing that word was pierced to the heart, and thus brought out of darkness into the "marvellous light." Another was carelessly passing by, and hearing the preacher solemnly repeat the question, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" was arrested and brought to the Lord. A man was sitting at his fireside, when his wife returned from a meeting. Something in her manner cut him to the heart; the result was his conversion. A young woman scoffed and swore she would never attend revival meetings. Her wicked vow recoiled upon her. She feared she had sold herself to the devil. After a season of mental anguish, she obtained forgiveness, and led a new life. A young man came with his companion to an open-air service for the purpose of scoffing. He was awakened and enabled to receive Christ, at which his friend went away in a rage. "I wondered why they were so happy," said another, in reference to the joy of the Christians. "I was resolved to get at the bottom of it, and had no rest till I found out the secret for myself." One day, about the time the work began, a piercing cry for mercy was heard in a church. That cry was the voice of God to several persons, who dated either their first conviction or their conversion from that day. It was thus, they said, things unseen and eternal were made real to them.

A company of men were one night carousing in a public-house in the outskirts of Dundee, when the sound of voices was heard singing a spiritual song. It was a little band of Christian young women on their way home from a religious meeting, and they were giving expression to their joy in the Lord by singing—

"One is kind above all others,
Oh, how He loves!"

The words of the hymn fell with a strange power upon the ear of a young man sitting at the tavern table. The others seemed not to hear the voice of the singers as they passed: to him it was the voice of God. He was arrested by the Holy Spirit, and became dumb with silence. His companions were astonished. They thought he had suddenly gone mad. In vain they questioned him, in vain

they jeered. He rose and left the house. As he paced the street in the darkness of night, the words of the hymn kept ringing in his ears. He thought of the love of that Saviour whom he had hitherto rejected. The thought pierced his heart, and he burst into tears. I shall never forget his subdued and grieved look as he made his way into my study and told me how God had smitten his heart in the public-house, and turned his pleasures into wormwood and gall. He seemed to see his sins in the light of Christ's love. In answer to his eager enquiries about the way of salvation, I did not fail to preach Christ to him, and not in vain, I trust, as he entered at once on a new course of life.

As contrasting with this case and illustrative of the variety of means employed by the Holy Spirit to awaken sinners, the following instance may be given. A young man, well known to the writer, was living without God and without hope in the world. He was not conscious of a single thought respecting a future state, and did not so much as believe in the being of a God. His Sabbaths were spent in worldly recreation and pleasure. One Lord's day in summer he was rambling in the fields. The sun was shining brightly, and nature was clad in her most beautiful array. As he looked on the smiling landscape, suddenly and for the first time the thought arose in his mind, All this must have had a beginning: whence and how did it begin? A long train of thought led him to the conclusion that the world must have had a Maker. Then came the question, Who is He? What is He? Again he launched out on a sea of speculation, and once more reached firm ground in the belief that the world's Maker must be a living, personal Being, very great and very glorious. By this time he had lost sight of the beauties of the landscape, and felt as if he was alone with the Creator. Now another question arose: What am I to this glorious Being, and what is He to me? On this line of thought he entered with great reluctance, for he felt a misgiving as to the result, and feared He would discover things fitted to render him unhappy. But he dared not, he could not turn back. He felt he was like a man waking up in a dark cave with a solitary ray of light coming from afar. If he is to emerge under the open heavens he must follow the light. He tries, he stumbles, he is stunned,

but he rises, and again spying the glimmer of distant day, he holds on his doubtful course. He now said to himself, If there be such an one as God it concerns me to know as much as possible about Him. He then and there resolved to use all means to find out about God. He went home and betook himself to reading, meditating, and reasoning. The next stage arrived at was the painful conviction that he had never acknowledged this God, or done his duty to Him, and had in fact poured contempt upon Him by his negligence. As soon as a sense of guilt thus fastened on him, he felt he could ramble no more on the Lord's day. Thenceforth he began to pursue his enquiries by prayer as well as reading and thinking. The light grew; his trouble increased. He would now see what Christians had to say in the matter; and accordingly began to attend the ordinary and special services of religion at a time when remarkable power accompanied the preaching of the Word. Here he found God. He found Him in Christ. He found Him at the cross. Now, this young man's religious experience has always seemed to me to be a good practical illustration of the text, "We shall know, if we follow on to know the Lord," and also of Christ's word, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." He seemed to act up to his light, yielding to the force of truth, truth in its own native energy with the superadded force of the Holy Spirit, in whose light alone we can see light. The logical faculty is strongly developed in him; and by that door the Holy Spirit saw fit to enter into his heart. He still goes on reasoning out everything. The other day I found he had just proved to himself on logical grounds these two things; first, that a Christian ought to be filled with *humility and love*; and, secondly, that no religion but the religion of Christ can make a man *truly humble and loving*. After his conversion, he found recreation on the Lord's day in teaching a class in the sabbath-school. He is now prosecuting a course of study preparatory to the ministry of the gospel.

Listen to a dying man. "Five years ago I was a drunkard, a profane swearer, an infidel, and little better than a beast. I heard the gospel in the street. The Lord arrested me and turned me to Himself. He has kept me ever since,

and I am saved. I am going to be with Christ, which is far better. Help me to praise Him." So saying, he began to sing,

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;"

and he literally sang out his last breath and died.

Look at yon grey-haired mother, whose heart is beginning to know joy for the first time these many years, as she clasps to her bosom her only daughter recovered from a life of folly and sin. "O my Annie! my Annie! my ain lost Annie! I never thocht I wad hae seen you mair. But the gude God has been better to me than a' my fears. Are we ever gaun to pairt again, Annie?" "Never, mither, never! Jesus has saved me Himsel', an' He has promised to keep me, an' He will never brak his word. We'll never pairt, mither; na, by his grace, never, never!" Nor did they ever part till the Lord Jesus came and took Annie away. I saw her depart, and in truth she went home as a bride adorned for her marriage. The daughter's recovery led to the mother's salvation.

A young man was one night awakened at a meeting, and began to inquire the way of life. Night after night passed; he was constantly present, but no peace came to his heart, and he grew worse. One evening Duncan Matheson took him aside into the ante-room of the hall, and said to him, "Now, are you really willing to have this awful business settled? Christ is willing, are you?" The young man replied that he was willing. They knelt to pray. As they prayed light and peace suddenly dawned, and the young man started to his feet in a tumult of joy and praise. Several of us, and among the rest the father of the young man, who was greatly alarmed at the son's despair, entered the room at that moment. Addressing the father, a Christian man, the evangelist introduced the son, saying, "Sir, this thy son was dead, and is alive again; was lost, and is found." As the son rushed into the arms of his affectionate and overjoyed father, the heart of every one present was deeply moved.

A woman, mother of a large family, was one day awakened, and so heavily did the terrors of the Lord press upon her spirit, that she fled the house of God. She could bear

preaching to sinners, she said, but when the people of God were addressed, it was too much for her. Some can hear the law who will not hear the gospel. She became worse and worse, till at length reason seemed to be giving way. She dreaded to enter a place of worship because she was so wicked. At this juncture Mr. Matheson, who had frequently spoken to her, as a sort of last resource, said, "Well, I can say no more to you than this: do you as one poor soul did, who said, 'I will just lie doon here till the Lord lift me up.'" Curiously enough this proved to be the grand turning-point. She said to herself, "I will just do so." In short, she ceased from her vain efforts of self-help, and cast herself on the Lord. Great was her joy. She was a wonder to her neighbours, who had witnessed her previous "madness;" and, better still, she has these many years maintained a thoroughly Christian profession, and one after another of her family has through her instrumentality been turned to the Lord.

One evening a young lady of great intelligence and personal beauty, who was perfectly thoughtless and gay, was induced, as a matter of curiosity, to enter a certain place of worship. There was nothing new or striking in the service, she thought; "It is just the old thing," she said to herself. One thing, however, struck her as the service proceeded, and that was the *solemnity of the preacher*. "The thing is evidently *real* to him," she said to herself; and she could not but listen to him, although she imagined she knew all he had to say. The solemnity of the preacher impressed her. This impression was the opening of her heart, and by this gate the King of glory entered in. Her subsequent life was singularly beautiful. She seemed to walk beneath an unclouded sky. Always trusting, always hopeful, always rejoicing, always ready for every good work,—a most rare instance of childlike, progressive, blessed discipleship. Her bright career was short. After a few years she took ill and died. A sharp conflict with the great adversary befell her in her last days; but she came up from that valley of humiliation "more than conqueror through Him that loved us," and she felt assured, she said, Satan would never assail her any more. In her communion, which was singularly close and elevated, she seemed to speak to her Lord face

to face. Her path from first to last was indeed as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

"I was fairly in the devil's grip," said a working man, in his homely, graphic way, as he told me the story of the Lord's merciful dealings with his soul. "But Christ cam' to me when I was little expectin' Him, an' took a haud o' me. Syne the deevil pulled me ae way, an' Christ He pulled the ither way, an' I had a sair time o't. But I cam' to ken that Christ is far stronger than Satan, an' that was weel for me." I was witness so far to this pulling, which seemed well-nigh to rend the poor soul in pieces. It was, doubtless, the tug of war—Immanuel laying siege to the city of Mansoul.

Let a different sort of witness speak,—a gentleman of the most accomplished type. "Several years ago I was, I regret to confess, a pharisee of the pharisees. From my infancy I was taught to respect religion, and despise everything vulgar and coarse. Accordingly I attended the house o' God, maintained a fair reputation, fancied I was a good man, and had the best chance for heaven. Unexpectedly God opened my eyes. This He did by means of the merest trifle—a petty act of meanness done to a friend, which somehow took possession of my thoughts, tormented me, put me off sleep, and led me to look deeper into my heart than I had ever done. Thus I was led to discover what I had never really seen before—my native depravity, and proud hostility to God. I saw that my own righteousness, to use the common phrase, was only filthy rags. I saw that my very religion was full of sin, and that, in fact, I had been going to church and to the Lord's table just to patronize the Almighty and honour myself. I was now in a measure humbled, and was not ashamed to make my appearance at the revival meetings, where fresh light awaited me. You know the rest. I became indeed a new creature. So completely was my mind revolutionized, that the very hymns I used to hate as being exaggerated, Methodistic, and ranting, now expressed the deepest feelings of my heart. But the change was more than one of mere sentiment. Had I previously died I should certainly have perished."

"Sir," said a woman to me one day whom I happened to meet, "I am happier than I was on my marriage day."

Some time previous to this she had been brought to Christ at one of the evangelistic meetings when Mr. Matheson was assisting us. Her husband, a drunkard and scoffer, was maddened by her conversion, and gave her no peace night or day. Her godly ways were intolerable to him. He beat her till her life was in danger; but she bore this brutal treatment with true Christian fortitude and meekness, rendering good for evil, and praying for his conversion without ceasing. "I am happier than I was on my marriage day. God has heard my prayer; my poor husband is converted. He is like a lamb, and thinks he cannot do enough to please me. Oh, sir, if you had but seen him the other night holding family worship for the first time! It was like heaven upon earth! There wasn't a dry eye in the house; and our little lassie looked up in his face and said, 'Father, ye'll win to heaven noo. An' I'll gang wi' you; an' we'll a' be there. I never thocht I wad like to gang to heaven afore.'" Grace, mercy, and peace seem since that day to have rested on the house.

Yonder, at the corner of Ann Street, early on Sabbath mornings, you can see a fierce, tiger-like young man going about among the loungers, and begging a few pence to procure the drunkard's indispensable dram. A few years pass, and the same young man is seen at the same street corner at the same hour on Sabbath mornings; but what a change! With his Bible in one hand, whilst the other is stretched out towards his hearers, he beseeches them with tears to believe on that Saviour who has delivered his soul from the lowest hell. The preaching may be poor enough, but the man himself is a sign and a wonder. "I knew *the two Robert Annans*," said one to me; "and when I remembered the wild profligate begging a dram, and saw him now so meek and Christian-like, nothing ever impressed me so much, and I began to feel for the first time there must be a reality in religion."*

There were many striking answers to prayer. One of the most remarkable I may here give. A young woman who had found the Saviour at one of the meetings when Mr. Matheson was with us, requested special prayer one night on behalf of her brother, a sailor, who had not been

* See "The Christian Hero:—the Life of Robert Annan." Same author and publishers.

heard of for a long while. Prayer was offered for the conversion of the wanderer. Some three months afterwards the young woman appeared at a meeting, and introduced her brother in a state of religious concern. Strange as it may appear, he had been awakened at sea on the very night on which prayer had been offered on his behalf. His own account of the matter was this: He was pacing the deck in the stillness of the night, when a thought about his soul took hold of him, and the more he strove to put it away from him the worse he grew. He had no peace till he returned home. We, of course, preached Christ to him. Why should we reckon such things incredibly strange? Does not our Father in heaven answer the prayers of his children every day? Has he promised, and will He not perform? Where is our faith?

In many ways our evangelist rendered important service to the cause and work of God in this town. When the movement had nearly reached its limit, and it seemed as if the hand of the Lord was being withdrawn, Mr. Matheson, ever fertile in resources, and panting after greater things, suggested that a whole night should be set apart for humiliation and prayer. With his wonted energy and promptitude he arranged the details, and cleared the obstacles away. Accordingly a goodly company of praying men assembled in Euclid Street Chapel, and spent the night, from nine or ten o'clock till six next morning, in intercession. That night was to many present one of the most memorable seasons of their life. The sense of the majesty and immediate presence of Jehovah rested on every soul. In the awful stillness of the night watches we realized eternity. The fact that thousands of our fellow-citizens were sleeping on the verge of hell seized our minds with overwhelming vividness, and the whole company were bathed in tears. O Dundee! Dundee! how hast thou been exalted unto heaven in the compassionate cries and anguished pleadings of those that loved thee even when they were hated by thee! May thy repentance turn away from thee the judgment of Capernaum! That night of prayer was followed by most striking displays of saving power. Instances of conversion sufficient to fill a volume could be here given; but I must forbear.

Of the converts, some are now in the ministry, some are missionaries, evangelists, scripture-readers, elders, deacons, students, sabbath-school teachers, and district visitors; while a still greater number are embraced in the less known, but hardly less useful, rank and file of the King's army. Some of all those classes were converted through the instrumentality of Duncan Matheson. To his sword, indeed, which seemed seldom to return empty, ever fell a full share of the spoils of this glorious war.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DIOCESE OF OPEN AIR.



THE Huntly meetings played an important part in connexion with the work of grace in the north of Scotland. They had their origin in a thought of Duncan Matheson's, and to him under God they owed no small part of their success. One day, pondering the best means of promoting the good work, the thought of gathering the people from the surrounding country for a great field-day of the gospel in the Castle Park flashed across his mind. After prayerful consideration of the scheme, he mentioned it to his fellow-labourers, Mr. Williamson and Mr. Bain, as they were all three returning from Cullen feeing market, where they had been preaching. They resolved to lay the matter before the Lord. There and then, wearied though they were, they betook themselves to the throne of grace, and as the train was speeding on its way, they cried to God for light to guide them. Light was not withheld: the scheme was settled at the mercy-seat. The use of the Castle Park, with suitable aid in other respects, was freely accorded by the Duchess of Gordon, and preparations were made, the burden of which mainly rested on Mr. Matheson and his pastor. The labour thus entailed was extremely great, and our evangelist was well-nigh crushed beneath the load of responsibility and care. After a sleepless and prayerful night on the eve of the Huntly meetings, he said to me, "I feel as if I were breaking down. I have been putting up blood, and feel very ill. Sometimes Satan tempts me to

take it easier, and do less for souls: he whispers when I am speaking in the open air, 'You had better take it easier, or you'll burst a blood-vessel.' But I just reply, 'Never mind if I do; I could not die in a better cause.'"

The object of these meetings was stated in a printed request for special prayer. "We do not believe," said the pastor and the evangelist, "in any special virtue in meetings in the open air. We put no confidence in any peculiar form of address, neither in any instrument. But we do believe in the power of prayer: we believe 'the hour is coming and *now* is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.' We believe it a good thing and ground of hope to see a number of the Lord's people met together 'with one accord in one place.' And we most firmly believe that the God of all grace may be expected to honour such meetings and efforts, when preceded and accompanied by earnest and united prayer for the outpouring of his Spirit.

"We, therefore, most earnestly ask secret, social, and united prayer, that the arm of the Lord may be revealed; that Jesus may be lifted up, and draw all men unto Him; and that throughout eternity many may have cause to bless God that they were present at these meetings and found salvation."

The first meetings were held on the 25th and 26th July, 1860, and were renewed for three successive summers. Many thousands assembled year by year in the Castle Park, with its hoary ruins towering amid the softest scenes of sylvan beauty. Here of old the Gordon clan were wont to gather in preparation for some distant and bloody raid. Now another clan assembles for very different ends. The children of Zion gather themselves together to meet their King; the soldiers of the cross rally around the standard of Christ. The coming and going of the people to serve God amidst the loveliest retreats of nature reminded one of the conventicles of the Covenanters in some remote glen or dewy hollow, and of the still more memorable scenes when multitudes gathered round the Prince of open-air preachers by the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Here nature and grace embrace each other in true fellowship, and the works of God throw a peculiar charm around his word and worship.

The lofty canopy of heaven reminds you of the true tabernacle which God hath pitched, and not man. The fair landscapes on every side picture heavenly things to the sense, and shadow forth in natural form and hue the invisible glories of the spirit-world. The grassy plains suggest the green pastures where the Good Shepherd feeds his flock, and makes them rest at noon. The sighing of the wind among the trees, and the warbling of the birds, seem like the rustling of angels' wings, and the stir of ministering spirits sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation. The pure air comes to wearied pilgrims like deep, refreshing draughts from the Creator's wine-cup. The sweet sunshine is to faith but the visible radiance of the Redeemer's face; and the alternations of light and shade are like the mysterious comings and goings of our God in his sanctuary. The very sound and shock of the falling rain carry into the believer's heart symbolized thoughts of grace far more true to nature than the peal of organs or the swell of pompous choirs. Altogether there is a naturalness, a simplicity, and a freedom more akin to the spirit and privilege of new-covenant service than is often realized in those dull artificial caverns in which custom and the rigours of climate compel us to worship. Sitting under the shadow of cumbrous roofs and dingy walls, and too oft fettered by form, truth, love, joy, and praise, pine away like caged birds; but out in the open, unbounded expanse, where form is simplest and sense is purest, worship is the more free and unrestrained.

It was pleasing to witness the assembling of the people in the Castle Park; old and young, rich and poor, master and man are there. Yonder the honest cotter, with his wife and bairns in the rude cart consecrated to the service of God, it may be for the first time, jogs cheerfully along not far behind the gig of the well-to-do farmer, whose wife and daughters are looking forward to the ongoinings of the day with deeper and stronger feelings than any they ever felt on their way to kirk or market. Some are trudging on foot, and all are talking with more or less personal interest in the great event of the time—the Revival. Listen to yon knot of ploughmen and farm-lads. One wonders “what it's gaun to come tae.” Another “kens weel aneuch what it's a gaun to come tae, for he has fan't in his ain hert; it

has brocht him to Christ, an' it'll bring him to heaven." A third admits that "a wonderfu' change has come o'er Jake Tamson; for there was na a rocher chiel in a' the country side, an' noo he's as hairmless as a stirk, an' sings an' prays instead o' swearin' an' fechtin' as he used to do." "Eh, mon," says a half-grown lad, "gin ye only heard my brither Jock! he prays like a minister; in fack, his prayer is ilka bit as gude as the pairish minister's prayer on the Sacrament Sunday."

"Do you ever take God's name in vain?" asks a minister of the gospel of one of these herd laddies.

"Na, na, sir; God's children never sweer."

"You are one of his children, then? When did that come about?"

"Weel, sir," says the lad, "it was at the Mertimiss term last year, when I gaed hame to see my father's fouk. I wonnert when I saw a' things sae sair changed. My father was changed, an' the hoose was changed-like. An' my father, he prayed afore the supper an' after the supper, an' he never used to say a grace at a'. An' syne he said, 'Fesh ben the buik;' an' he read, an' he sang, an' syne they a' gaed doon upon their knees, an' I never saw that afore. An' my father he prayed, an' I grat, an' we a' grat, an' I was convertit that nicht. That was Mertimiss last year, ye ken, an' I never could sweer sin' syne."

The full meaning of all this can be comprehended only by those who know what a northern bothy used to be. There, if anywhere on earth, Satan was wont to have his seat; now, however, to some extent the "strong man" has been displaced by a stronger than he.

The greater number came by rail, which, in this way serving God as well as man, seemed to anticipate the day when "holiness to the Lord" shall be upon the bells of the horses, and doubtless also on the whistles of the engines. In one carriage prayer is being offered for a special blessing on the meetings. In another the Word is read with comments, homely enough, but well seasoned with a devout spirit and a gracious experience. In a third a distressed soul is being lovingly dealt with; difficulties are cleared away, and the cross lifted up before the eye of the afflicted sinner. High over all, and above even the din of the train,

is heard the voice of holy song. One group is singing "Rock of Ages, cleft for me;" in another part of the train you can hear the splendid burst of the ancient church,

"All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice."

A traveller who has left his religion at home—perhaps because it was scarcely worth the carriage—is to be pitied, for in escaping from one compartment to another he finds that he is only out of the pan and into the fire. It would be a curious turning of the tables if some day this poor foolish world should be so filled with purity, goodness, and the love of God, that the few remaining sinners, to escape the gentle persecution of light and grace, should flee for refuge to dens and caves of the earth. Then, indeed, the church would be "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."

The services were characterised by the fervour and simplicity of the prayers, the heartiness and jubilation of the praises, and the variety, directness, and power of the addresses, full as these were of the richest truths of the gospel, and fragrant with the perfumes of *the one great Name*. In love, joy, and unanimity, the believers seemed to anticipate the general assembly of the Church of the first-born in heaven, and the triumphant services before the throne. On the other hand, the deep shadows of eternal verities seemed to rest on the minds of the unconverted, not a few of whom found Him whom they sought after, and sometimes; ere the tears were dry on their cheeks, were beginning to "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

The testimony of an eye-witness, a venerable minister of Christ, may be here given. "During each day," he writes, "numbers were personally spoken with and specially prayed for, in every stage of religious concern. Not a few were awakened for the first time during the time of the meetings, principally by witnessing the great earnestness manifested in prayer in behalf of the unconverted, as well as by listening to the pointed and soul-searching appeals addressed to the various classes. Others, who had previously been under great spiritual distress, had come some of them twenty and

even thirty miles, as well as lesser distances, seeking relief to a conscience ill at ease. In the case of others who came under our notice, former convictions that had well-nigh died out were revived with double power. The superficial observer could form no correct estimate of the amount of impression by merely looking at the appearance of the assembly; for there was comparatively little manifestation of emotional excitement; nor by simply looking at those in the tent and marquee, who professedly took their place among other enquirers. We found numbers of the most interesting cases of this class at a distance from the crowd, either holding intercourse with God alone, and breathing into his ear their noiseless grief; or in some by-corner holding close conversation with some godly friend who sympathized with them; or in the midst of little groups among the trees, where spiritual things were freely talked over by those with open Bibles in their hands, following up conversation with prayer. We conversed with several persons, some of them considerably advanced in years, upon whose minds something like the dark shadow of despair had been brooding for months. They could distinctly tell what was the matter with them, and what they needed; but somehow they stumbled at the simplicity of entering upon the way of life as sketched in the charter of human salvation. Of the above-mentioned cases a considerable number, before they left the meetings, were enabled to leave their sins and their sorrows within the shadow of the mercy-seat at the foot of the cross, and went home in possession of a good hope through grace. All who took pains to make themselves acquainted with what we have stated are firmly persuaded, and on good grounds, that in connexion with these meetings, 'to Satan many captives were lost, and to Christ many subjects were born.'"

The meetings were held for two successive days every summer, from 1860 to 1863 inclusive. Duncan Matheson was the presiding genius of the arrangements: he was everywhere and in everything. Here speaking to an afflicted soul, there encouraging a young Christian; now pouring out his quaint, spirit-stirring speech amidst a group of youths, and a moment after gravely settling some deep experimental question with an aged pilgrim. Almost at the same point of

time he is providing lodgings for his friends, and making suggestions of the most sagacious character as to the programme of religious services. Now he is leading the devotions of the great assembly in his own impressive and Elijah-like manner, and in less than five minutes he is in the outskirts of the crowd, endeavouring by wise, kind words to hush some rising controversy. At every juncture he knows what to do. When the people were hurrying away on account of a thunder-storm, he stopped them by reminding them that the Covenanters could stand a shower of bullets, and that God can stay the rain in answer to prayer. Prayer was offered, and the rain ceased. "Look!" exclaimed the evangelist. "Behold the bow of promise spanning the heavens! emblem of God's good-will to earth." All eyes were turned to look on the rainbow, "like unto an emerald around the throne of God." Revealing itself just as the thunder-torrent swept over the horizon of the distant hill, as if chased away by the sudden outburst of sunshine, it symbolized to many the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, in whose cross mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Many who have forgotten the preaching, remember the lesson of the evangelist, who, with hand uplifted to heaven, bade the vast multitude read the gospel in the sky, and see the beauty of Jesus in the bow with its matchless hues.

It was a good work to bring together so many thousands of Christians to sing the same song, to mingle faith, hope, and charity in the same prayer, and to encourage one another in the common Lord. It was the gathering of all the live coals into one great fire, whose flames were bright enough to illuminate no small part of Scotland. In this way the evils of sectarianism were mitigated, and the bonds of Christian brotherhood strengthened. Young converts, suffering from isolation and the lack of fellowship, were refreshed and sent on their way rejoicing. The poor starved sheep of Christ's flock were fed on green pastures and strengthened to endure. Persecuted believers, reproached by friends, scorned by neighbours, cast off by companions, and frowned upon by carnal pastors, were emboldened to fight the good fight of faith. Many who were halting between two opinions, being uncertain as to the nature and tenden-

cies of the great movement of the time, had their doubts and fears cleared away. Many earnest and faithful ministers of the gospel went home from those happy scenes to labour in their own quiet vineyards with a still holier zeal, livelier hope, and deeper joy. Many saints returned to walk more closely with their God; and some whom we knew received at the Huntly meetings a double meal, like Elijah in the wilderness, in the strength of which they went, and came even to the mount of God. To many it was the starting-point of their pilgrimage to Zion, and the sweet memories of those gracious espousals and first loves will merit and inspire "nobler songs above." In short, thousands live to praise God for the open-air meetings in the Castle Park, and similar meetings elsewhere, of which the gathering at Huntly was at once the parent and the broad distinct pattern.

Thus the little germ of thought arising in the mind of our evangelist bore choicest fruits in marvellous abundance. It was part of the arduous and honourable work assigned him by his Master. A double grace was bestowed upon him in it—grace to do the work faithfully and well, and the grace of abounding success. For this kind of work he was pre-eminently well qualified. His powerful physique, his cheerful countenance, his exultant voice, his overflowing humour, his innocent and childlike egotism which carried in it something of the charm of genius, his practical sagacity and swift decision, his fertility of resource and power to grasp a multitude of details, his keen-eyed intuition of human character, his ability to inspire and command, his invincible ardour in the presence of difficulties, his great faith, largeness of heart, and Christian self-sacrifice, combined to fit him in an extraordinary degree for the masterly and successful management of a great undertaking such as this really was. There were many witnesses to the grace and truth of Christ at the Huntly meetings, ministers of every name, learned professors, eloquent divines, lawyers, physicians, lords, landowners, merchants, officers of the army and navy, and many others down to the fisherman and the butcher, who said, "I canna write my ain name, but it has been written by the finger o' Anither—written in blood in the Lamb's book o' life," one of the truest and noblest of them all was the old stone-cutter, Duncan Matheson. His

it was not merely to speak for Christ, but to gather up this great united testimony, which illustrated the unity of the true faith as it has seldom been illustrated in our own day or in our fathers'. His it was to concentrate as in a focus the scattered rays of the glorious sun that was then pouring his golden floods upon our favoured land, alike on hill and dale, on barren moorland and fruitful field.

At a "conference on the subject of the present religious awakening," held in the Free South Church, Aberdeen, on August 15th, 1861, we find our evangelist saying: "Revival is an established fact. It is a great fact. Thousands, many thousands, have felt the power of God in their own souls. I do not, perhaps, know of one place in the county of Aberdeen where there are not living witnesses to the power of God's grace and the might of his Spirit. There is one thing that has always struck me with wonder: it is this—Why should we think it a strange thing to see a work like this work of revival? If we believe God's Word at all, we must believe that He is able, willing, and mighty to save. Why wonder, then, that He is saving so many? Might we not rather expect that He will do far greater things? A man said to me, 'Are you in the revival?' 'No, sir,' I replied, 'the revival is in me; it is in my heart.' I believe that many of God's people feel this. We never did feel so much joy, and blessedness, and gladness, as since these blessed days when the Lord has been pouring out his Spirit—planting flowers in his garden that will bloom through an endless eternity. I could hardly tell you where I have not seen God's work. I have been wandering for nearly four years—north, south, east, and west—and the Lord is doing great things everywhere. We see the sheaves being gathered to God's harvest-home; and what can we do but say, 'Our God reigns; verily we have seen the salvation of Israel; verily we have seen answered the prayers of the men whose blood was shed in defence of our faith—the witnesses whose souls have been crying under the altar.' And we have only seen the beginning; the end is at hand. Why, I ask again, should this be thought a strange thing? What is the great end of the Christian ministry? There is no antagonism between us and the ministry; we go as breakers-up of the way, and God has been pleased to own us. We do not in-

terfere in the least with the constituted ministry; for I believe, as solemnly as I do in any part of God's Word, that He has appointed a ministry for the conversion of souls, and the upbuilding of his people; and the cry of our heart day by day is, 'Oh, would that all the Lord's people were prophets!' We look and see day by day souls going down to perdition; and if we believe in a heaven and hell, in an unending eternity, we will go forth like men going to quell fire, saying, 'Stop, poor sinner! come with us, and we will do thee good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel.' I might tell in this meeting what I have seen in many places. I might speak of what I witnessed in S—— during the last few days; of the awful solemnity upon our spirits, when it seemed as if we felt the immediate power of God in our hearts; and we were almost afraid to speak, as if one felt very near the gates of heaven. Some of us felt so at S——. And when we saw the Lord working and the slain so many, we lifted up our hearts and sang, 'Hallelujah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.'

"One thing I have seen, and I have thanked the Lord for it; it has done immense good; it is the deliverance of the last Free General Assembly on this great and glorious work. The results from that deliverance, the good it has done, we cannot estimate. I have seen members of the Free Church lifted up in their souls, and thanking God for that noble testimony. Since it was issued it has given a great impetus to the work. It has been true, and always will be true to the end, 'Them that honour Me I will honour.' I have seen the objections of many scattered to the winds since it was given. And since it was read from the pulpits of the churches, I have seen a manifest blessing upon the ministry and the people. Let me remark this other thing,—that some people always find fault. Well, we cannot help it; and we admit that there are very many things that we ourselves cannot prevent, that yet we do not desire. A great many things have been said about enquiry meetings. I look upon these as the most solemn part of the work—just dealing with souls face to face. It is of great importance that all who thus speak to the anxious should be known—that their real state and character before God should be tested. We should know also that they have something of that

wisdom that cometh down from above. I believe there are many of God's people who fail in this work. I have seen them giving the comforts of God's children to the anxious. I have heard godly persons saying to such, 'Wait God's time;' and, 'You are in a very hopeful state,'—just strangling their convictions. Oh, if there is one part of the work in which we need more than in another the aid of the Holy Spirit, it is in dealing with anxious souls. Mr. Ross has spoken about the coast. I know a great deal about the coast, and upon this coast no one has been more honoured than Mr. Turner, of Peterhead. That man's footsteps, speaking after the manner of men, I have been able to trace all round the coast. Look at Banff—what a work he has done there; and at Portknockie, Buckie, Portgordon. You see the Lord taking that instrument and using him; he was used for a time, and then put aside. It is a solemn thing when God uses a man for a time, and then puts him aside. It is not the opposition of man we fear. I was never able to do anything till I was opposed, and so it has been with others. I would remark, in closing, that I have always seen the work produce greatest fruits under the soundest teaching. An old Highland minister said, 'It is a dangerous thing for a child to get bad milk;' and you generally see where there is not sound teaching they are like the young thrushes, ready to eat mud if given to them. They have no discernment. But where there is sound teaching they grow up like calves in the stall; the grace of God is in them, and we see it shining. There is just this in it,—the good old doctrines will stand the test, for they are built upon the Rock of Ages. Oh, may we hold them fast; and when we depart hence, leave behind us 'footprints on the sands of time,' or, rather, on the shores of eternity."

Not content with scouring his native country, he sometimes crossed the border, and everywhere the strong voice and steady hand were raised to point men to the cross. In the autumn of 1862 he visited his old friends, the soldiers, at Aldershot, and described his visit in the following letter, which appeared in *The Revival*.*

* A weekly periodical now incorporated with "The Christian."

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—Swiftly has the time passed since I came here, and never throughout eternity shall I forget my visit to this place. There is not a spot in Britain around which such interest clings, and for which more prayer has been offered up.

"My heart thrilled as I saw a camp once more, heard the strains of martial music, and gazed on the red coats, either singly, or in groups, or regiments marching along. The past was brought vividly before me, but the contrast could hardly be realized. In the Crimea, day and night, nothing was heard but the roar of the cannon, or the din of battle; and during a long dreary winter, nothing seen but misery, that made the heart bleed, borne with calm endurance and heroic valour, giving English history a page it never had. It is true that at Aldershot the bugle sounds, but it calls only to parade, or to take part in mimic fights. Regiments march, but not to battle. The gun fires, but only to mark the hours as they pass along. The scene is bustling but peaceful, and order reigns in the camp supreme.

"I have met few old friends, for death has done his work, and the heroes of Alma, Inkermann, Sebastopol, have passed away—yes, away like the snow-flakes before the summer's sun, or the leaves of the forest before the wintry blast. In the lone graveyard here, on the bleak moor side, lie many who escaped unscathed amidst the iron showers and the deadly pestilence. With constitutions impaired, they returned to die, leaving as an heir-loom in many a home the medal and its bars of glory, worn but for a little, and then laid aside for ever. *Sic transit gloria mundi.*

"It is estimated that during the summer from 15,000 to 18,000 men are stationed here, and the influence of such a mass on the town of Aldershot is of the most ruinous kind. Much has been written about it, and yet it is impossible to make the picture too dark, or to bring out in relief its degrading aspects. Just think of upwards of seventy public-houses outside the camp, and you will realize in some measure the seething mass of iniquity behind. The camp has made the town what it is, and the town sends back to the camp the curse intensified it has given. Many a daughter comes here to die, over whom a mother, it may be in the far north of Scotland, is weeping day and night.

One was asked lately if she had a mother ; and, as if stung by a serpent, she fled out of sight. Another says she is dying fast, but asks what she can do. A third laughs ; but it is hollow, coming from a heart torn with anguish, from burning fires within, fed by the memory of home and days gone—never more to come back again.

“Blessed be God, all is not dark. The cloud has a silver lining! There is much to quicken and cheer ; for the great God is visiting the camp, and drops of blessing have descended. Witness after witness is being raised, and the prayers, so long lying on the altar, are being answered. Hardly a week passes but there is an accession to the little army, and twelve prayer-meetings are held weekly by the men themselves. At some of these I have seen sixty men and a few officers present. What songs from your ‘Hymns of Prayer and Praise’ they sang! With what a heart did they peal out ‘Rest for the weary,’ and with what holy pleading did they cry for their comrades drifting to perdition! The heaven is working ; the seed is springing up ; and many are halting—lingering at the gate.

“Mrs. Daniell, so well known for her labours in the cause of Christ, has founded a mission for Aldershot, and forty officers and men have come forward as volunteers to help her on. The United Presbyterian Church is organizing a congregation, and will, I doubt not, succeed. May God speed them, and may their church be the birth-place of many a soul. May He also bless the labours of the chaplains and scripture-readers, whose work is so arduous, and who need more than common wisdom and zeal. Night after night I preached outside the camp in the open air, with a body-guard of Christian soldiers around me, some of whom, with much feeling, have addressed their comrades passing by.

“What noble missionaries these soldiers, if converted, would make ! How would their influence tell amongst the heathen abroad ! What a sight to see Britain sending forth an army of living men displaying a banner for the truth !

“I feel assured there is many a Hedley Vicars, Hammond, Vandeleur, Marjouram amongst them, and that God, by his Spirit, will soon bring them out. Aldershot is the cradle of the British army. The fire here is kindled. The

work has begun. The Prince of Peace is saving souls, and God is calling on his people to bestir themselves. England, Scotland, Ireland, your sons need help. Will you cry for the army, and forget not Aldershot?

“Yours in the Lord,

“DUNCAN MATHESON,

“Late Soldiers’ Missionary in the Crimea.”

The Rev. H. M. Williamson, Belfast, who was at once the pastor and fellow-evangelist of Mr. Matheson, writes:

“Confining myself to what I have witnessed, I would like to give you a brief sketch of his labours in the north of Scotland. He used to map-out a district, and arrange for an evangelistic tour, extending over six or eight days. I frequently accompanied him on such expeditions. Starting perhaps on a Monday, we were accustomed to preach generally twice each day, holding meetings in all conceivable places,—in barns, on the squares and streets of villages, under the trees of the woods, sometimes in various churches placed at our disposal. He thoroughly knew the feelings, habits, and prejudices of his countrymen, and with singular sagacity he employed that knowledge to gain the attention of his hearers and a favourable hearing for the gospel. He was never at a loss, and full of hope; he had a remedy for every difficulty, and was ready for every emergency. Let me give you as an illustration a scene which occurred on one of our preaching expeditions. We had arranged to hold a meeting in the streets of a certain village. The place was drowned in drink, and consequently spiritually dead above most places. At the appointed hour we made our appearance, and having made our way to the square of the village, and having borrowed a chair for a pulpit, we were prepared to proceed; but audience there was none, save two or three ragged children, who gathered round and stared at us as a curiosity. It was certainly a situation exceedingly trying to flesh and blood, and one that gave ample room for the exercise of faith. Matheson, by the grace of God, was equal to the occasion. I think I hear his cheery words, as he said to me, speaking in his broadest Doric, ‘Haud on, haud on, Mr. Williamson, for a wee bit

as weel as ye can, an' I'll fetch out the folk wi' the help o' God.' He started off, leaving me on the chair—no envied position, I assure you—with the children for my audience. He started off, and beginning at the extreme end of the village, he knocked at every door, and cried aloud *as he could cry*, 'Come awa' out, come awa' out; the gospel is come to the town;' and using at the same time, with his usual sagacity, the children he met as his agents, he said, 'Rin, laddie, rin; and tell yer mither to come awa' to the square, and hear the preaching.' We had a meeting—a successful meeting—we adjourned in the evening to a church in the village; and I have good reason to believe that redeemed souls in eternity will bless God for that meeting.

"There are few parishes in Aberdeenshire and Banffshire in which the name of Duncan Matheson is not known and loved, and very few in which he has not preached the gospel. The extent of the blessing which rested upon his labours shall only be known on that day when the secrets of all hearts are made manifest. I regret exceedingly that the account of all these labours is now lost for ever. Had he been spared to give it, it would have been a record of the Lord's doings of thrilling interest, and well fitted to strengthen every labourer in the Lord's vineyard. Many incidents attending his work were of a very remarkable nature, and if they had been recorded would have been pregnant with instruction and encouragement. I remember while holding a meeting one night in a certain place an occurrence which made a deep impression upon me at the time, and which I had occasion to mark afterwards. The meeting was crowded, and better still, it was full of spiritual power. Many souls were deeply wounded under the sharp strokes of the Holy Ghost. Some smitten ones were crying out, 'What must we do to be saved?'

"While we were going about among the anxious, seeking as we were enabled to point them to the Lamb of God, the individual who had control over the place of meeting began to urge the people to go home, and to crown his advice he proceeded to put out the lights. I think I hear Matheson as turning to me he said, 'Mr. Williamson, mark my words, you will see something happen to that man—the Lord will put out his candle!' Matheson, though

pretending to no spirit of prophecy, knew how dangerous it is to meddle with the work of the Holy Spirit. And so it came to pass. Matheson lived to see that man disgraced and dishonoured, and driven from his position. But if I persevere in calling up the events of these years of blessing my letter will swell into a volume.

“The great gatherings for Christian fellowship and for preaching the everlasting gospel with which Scotland, and especially in the northern parts, was favoured in past years are closely connected with Duncan Matheson.

“Shortly after the work of the Spirit began to be manifest in the awakening and conversion of sinners in Aberdeenshire in the years 1858-9, a conference of ministers was held at Huntly Lodge, under the auspices of the late Duchess of Gordon. That conference brought out the fact, that the work of God was much more extensive and thorough than any one had supposed. The work still made progress under opposition of various kinds and from all sources. Matheson traversed almost every parish of Aberdeenshire and the district around, everywhere preaching the gospel, and much blessing was added.

“Returning from one of these preaching expeditions, he proposed to me the idea of a grand gathering at Huntly, seeking the aid of men of all churches, both lay and clerical, whom God had honoured in the work of revival. The proposal took shape. It was approved of by the Duchess of Gordon, and by others whose good judgment, spirituality of mind, and zeal for the cause of God we could trust. The whole arrangements of the meetings were put into Matheson’s hands, and the results were great and blessed. Multitudes of believers from every corner of the land were refreshed and strengthened, and multitudes of the unsaved brought to Jesus.

“He had a singular gift for organizing such meetings. He thoroughly knew the people, as I have stated,—their mode of life, their habits, their prejudices on religious subjects, their wants, and their religious position. And with all this knowledge, when the meetings were assembled, he arranged accordingly with wonderful tact—he put the right man in the right place. He aimed at the conversion of sinners as the great end of the meetings, and in carrying out

this end he exhibited marvellous spiritual instinct in selecting the right speaker at the right time to give, under the Holy Spirit, the message which would bring about the blessed end. He knew too the men that were mighty in prayer, and endeavoured to keep them, with praying companions, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting. And in this matter he suffered no respect for persons to interfere. The men he believed were likely to be the instruments in the hands of the Spirit to do the work needed at any particular time in the services, these he brought forward.

"You and I have seen, in other cases and at similar gatherings, the whole work marred, and the fruit almost completely lost, because those who conducted such meetings deemed themselves bound to put forward speakers in a prescribed order, because of their social position or ministerial standing in church connexion.

"Matheson never for a moment allowed such considerations to influence him. The result corresponded. As he sought to honour the Holy Spirit, and kept a single eye on the great end, the salvation of souls, much fruit appeared.

"His efforts in preaching the gospel in the feeing-markets of Aberdeenshire were also attended with a very abundant blessing. It is a question upon which, perhaps, Christian men form different opinions. I think it admits of no controversy with all who are taught of God, that whenever men are willing to hear the gospel, then the gospel should be preached to them. Now, it is also a fact beyond dispute, that for some years the Lord poured such a spirit of hearing upon the people that they were willing to hear; and this also I may add, I have seen as marked and manifest fruits of the Spirit's presence and power attending these market preachings as I have ever witnessed on the Sabbath and in the most solemn assembly. This market-preaching was a department of labour for which Matheson was in many ways singularly fitted. Ready for every emergency, and with a tact which usually disarmed opposition, with a courage that never faltered, and with a voice like the tongue of a trumpet, he laboured in this field most laboriously, and in it I feel persuaded reaped many sheaves of the harvest of the Lord.

I have met many in later years who have testified that they would have cause to bless God for ever for these market preachings.

“Alas, the band of labourers in that field are now widely scattered! What sweet and solemn memories of these days and of the beloved fellow-labourers who wrought in this work with us! The saintly Macgregor and the good soldiers of Jesus Christ, Colonel Ramsey and Major Gibson, and the fearless Matheson—a prince of evangelists—all gone to their rest and their reward. The devoted pastors, Bain and Forbes, and Fullarton and Campbell (tried and true helpers), Tytler, and Macpherson, and Anderson still with us, and many other beloved brethren who have never been ashamed of the gospel of Christ.

“But this letter is drawn out far beyond what I intended, and yet I feel as if I had said almost nothing concerning the labours of our departed friend. Let me add, he was one of the most unselfish of men; he would and often did share his last shilling with a poor saint. He was ever ready to commend the gospel to the careless and the scoffer by deeds of generosity and liberality. What the church owes to Matheson has never been acknowledged. His share in elevating the standard of religious profession in the land, and especially in the northern part, has never been justly estimated. But his reward is on high. ‘They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.’”

An important part of our evangelist's mission was the preaching of the gospel in village fairs. The feeing-market, at which farmers engage their servants from one half-year to another, is a long-established institution in the northern counties of Scotland. It is usually held in the street or neighbourhood of some little town or village. Early in the morning of the market day there is a wonderful stir in the erection of refreshment-tents, booths for the sale of sweets, trinkets, and all things dear to a ploughboy's heart, shows, and all the other paraphernalia of a village fair. Soon after breakfast the market is crowded by farmers and their wives, ploughmen, female servants, and all who have business to do. Besides these there is a general assembly of all the

idlers and *ne'er-do-weels* in the countryside : tramps, tinkers, ballad-singers, fiddlers, rogues, beggar-women with starving babies, the man who is "out of employment" because he will not work, the shipwrecked sailor who never was at sea, the veteran soldier who has seen no service but the devil's—in short, all the scoundrels within a radius of thirty miles. No time is lost ; the whole machinery of the market is set a-going. All the animal spirits of half-a-score parishes and villages are now crowded into one place. There is no restraint ; universal freedom reigns. Wild hilarity, roaring frankness, outrageous demonstrations of friendship, characterize the scene, and a tumult of varied sounds fills the air. Underneath all this, however, there is an eye to business. Yonder in the open air, at the end of a tent, a fat, red-faced dame is piling up a blazing fire of peat, over which a huge pot is boiling with the farmers' broth. Close by a master is higgling with a ploughman about five shillings more or less of half-yearly wages ; and the bargain, after an immense deal of manœuvring as if both parties were perfectly indifferent to the matter, is settled in the good old Scotch way of "splitting the difference." Then follows the indispensable dram. A young swain has just spent his "arles" in treating his sweetheart with rude demonstrations of attachment. Another, already drunk, is dancing and capering to the wretched strains of a fiddle. Sailor Jack moves along with a curious limp as he sings his favourite ditty. The showman is doing his best to entertain the people and obtain their pence. Cheap John, with incredible generosity, insists on enriching the public to his own certain ruin, mixing his jokes and lies in due measures to meet the tastes of the gullible portion of market-goers. A recruiting sergeant is describing to a knot of young men the glory and blessedness of a soldier's life. On the outskirts of the fair a crew of drunken carters are bargaining with an unscrupulous horse-dealer for an old nag, which is being trotted up and down at the utmost speed possible to his wooden limbs. A tall, villainous one-legged speculator in human simplicity tempts to a game of chance, which is yet no chance to himself ; whilst his one-armed brother offers to teach the young idea how to shoot by means of bow and arrows which Tell himself could not have shot straight. A

hundred voices are crying their wares. As the day advances men and matters become more and more lively. Suddenly the crowd begins to surge to and fro, everybody knocking into his neighbour, no one knowing why. There is a fight; strong drink is master of the situation. A score of voices are raised with a score of hands; hard blows are dealt; but the greatest sufferer is the poor old woman whose "sweetie stand" is overturned in the scuffle, all her gingerbread cakes and coloured sweets are scattered in the mud. The same commander-in-chief is marshalling his hosts in a neighbouring tent, where a fierce conflict rages around the rude board. You can see the whole affair from without by the moving of hostile heads and arms against the canvas, which at length gives way, and the entire tabernacle of Satan, with a loud crash of bottles and glasses, rolls over upon the ground. Still the business of the fair goes on as before, its very life being in noise, excitement, and uproar. Towards evening the more respectable people take their way homewards, carrying with them all sorts of useful household articles purchased at the fair. Among the remaining portion the drinking and quarrelling go on apace; coarseness, profanity, and violence increase, till at length the deepening shades, not a moment too soon, cast the mantle of God over a very hell of riot, charged with all the elements of misery and ruin.

It was a bold idea to introduce the gospel here. It was like David's attempt to save the lamb by attacking the lion and the bear. For men of fine feelings to stand upon a box or barrel, occupying as it were the same platform with all that is coarse, sordid, and villainous, and amidst the bawling, the laughing, the blaspheming, the singing, the fiddling, the fighting, the ribaldry of mockers, the rage of the ungodly, and in the very atmosphere of blackguardism, to raise the "still small voice" of the gospel and speak to men heated with every passion, of "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come," was a work of the most trying kind. Sometimes they were made to feel that it were easier to face an armed host than bear the calumny and the shame. Often were they threatened, often assailed, and sometimes well-nigh put to silence; but they trusted in Him who hath all power in heaven and on earth; and sometimes, when they thought the Word was only like water spilt upon the ground,

they were amazed and overjoyed to discover rough, burly ploughmen breaking down under the truth, weeping like children, and asking what they must do to be saved. All over the north eastern counties you come upon strong, hard-headed, tender-hearted, God-fearing men, who tell you that they were "brocht tae the Lord" at such and such a market, giving you place and date of their second birth. Besides that, the general improvement in morals, particularly in the matter of sobriety, decency, and order, at some of the feeing-markets, was so marked as to draw forth expressions of wonder and admiration from even men of the world. If a sufficient number of suitable labourers were found for this work, a thorough reformation should be effected, as the experiment proved; but men possessing the necessary courage and zeal appear to be few, and such gigantic labours soon exhaust or kill them.

Nature and grace conspired to make Duncan Matheson a prince of market-preachers. His handsome, well-knit form impressed the sons of the soil with a sense of his great strength; his frank, straightforward manner commanded their respect; his ready wit captivated a people whose genuine humour is proverbial; his voice, rising above the din, summoned them as with a trumpet to listen; his manifest superiority to all fear made him a hero in their eyes; and the grace of the Holy Ghost with the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, did the rest. In this rough, self-denying work he was nobly assisted by several ministers of the gospel and other right-hearted servants of Jesus Christ.

Sometimes when a hearing could not be obtained, and further prosecution of the work seemed an utter waste of energy and time, Duncan would start up and begin thus—"I will tell you a thing that happened when I was in the Crimea." Immediately there is a respectful silence; the audience seem as if spell-bound while the preacher proceeds to tell his story, which is only an introduction to the gospel.

In a certain town a gentleman well known in the place came up to him as he was preaching in the market, and mockingly said, "Well, what is the word of the Lord to-day?" Our preacher turned with a piercing glance of his eye, and promptly replied, "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord!" Shortly afterwards that same scoffer

lay at the point of death in a room right over the corner where he had assailed the servant of God. He had been suddenly seized with what he believed were the pains of death ; and in his alarm he cried, " I am dying—run, run for Mr. — ; get a Bible—quick, quick ! " But ere human aid was procured, or the Bible brought from the shelf where it lay neglected, the accomplished scoffer had passed to his final account. This incident, with others of a similar character, tended to lessen the hostility at first shown to preaching in the market, and to pave the way for a respectful hearing of the gospel.

In another town the preachers were one day furiously assailed and subjected to much personal indignity and violence by a mob, led on by the paid agents of tavern-keepers, whose profits were diminished by the effective preaching of the gospel. For hours the preachers maintained their position in the outskirts of the market ; towards the close of the day, led on by Matheson, they pushed their way into the centre of the fair. Here they were set on by the entire rascality, hired and unhired, of the town ; but a shower happening at that crisis, the stentorian voice of our evangelist was heard high above the clamour shouting, " Off hats, men, and let us thank our Father in heaven, who sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust, for this refreshing shower, instead of fire and brimstone to consume us." The effect of this appeal was striking. Every voice was hushed, and every head uncovered, and one who was present describes the prayer of the evangelist as overwhelmingly touching and solemn. The battle was now turned to the gate, and the preachers carried all before them.

On another occasion the showman of a penny theatre, finding that his sarcastic merriment did not shame the preachers into silence, challenged them to come up to his platform, and see if they could speak there. The challenge, contrary to the expectations of the showman, was accepted, and our evangelist, accompanied by Mr. Hector Macpherson, took possession of the stage, to the astonishment of the whole market. Mr. Matheson began ; the showman was put to silence, and went away, leaving the evangelists in possession of his platform, from which they addressed an immense crowd with remarkable effect.

Prudence and tact were needed as well as courage. Sometimes he deemed it right to buy up the showmen ; by giving them a fair day's custom he procured their silence.

In a "Special Call for Prayer," he says: "These markets are fields of deepest trial. For long they have been left in the power of the wicked one, and thousands of souls have been ruined for eternity. Surely, we shall not ask for prayer in vain ; and when the banner of Christ is unfurled, shall there be one living soul found shrinking from the fight, or refusing to cry from the depths of their hearts, 'Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord'?"

The "special call for prayer" was accompanied by the use of other means, such as the following advertisement in a newspaper :—

"MARKET PREACHING.

"If the Lord permit, the Everlasting Gospel will be preached at Longside, Ellon, Aberdeen, Turriff, Inverury, and other feeing-markets.

"A SOLEMN QUESTION.

"How long do you think it would take you to count a billion? A billion is a million of millions; and if you were to count at the rate of two hundred a minute, it would require more than nine thousand years to finish it. Now, you must live a billion of years either in heaven or hell, and when that billion of years is past, you must live another billion of years, and then another, and another; and even then your life will only be, as it were, beginning. *You must live for ever, whether you will or no.* Is it not an awful thought that you are an immortal being, and that there is no escape into nothingness? Dear friend, you are making an awful blunder if you are living for this world only; and, if you die unsaved, it is a blunder that can never be remedied. Jesus offers to save you now. He died to save; and if you come to Him as you are—no matter how great a sinner you may be—He will save you; for He says, 'Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out.' The time is short, your soul is precious, and eternity is near.—D.M."

Mr. Matheson frequently assisted his friends in preaching

at the Dundee annual fair. In those days this fair was held in a quarry-pit in the centre of the town, and for crowds, excitement, dissipation, and ruin to the souls of the gay and thoughtless revellers, was equal to forty country markets. Here, as we too well know, many of the young tasted for the first time the devil's sweets. Here receiving their first great impulse hell-ward, they went bounding down the steep of dissipation until they disappeared amidst the darkness of a living death, or were wrapped in the deep shades of a premature grave. Here I have known the girl of fourteen disappear; and no tongue could tell the father and the mother's agony as they prosecuted for days and nights the saddest search on earth, in the hope of plucking from the jaws of ruin some fragments of their lost child's humanity.

In this very place, where Folly was scattering wide the seeds of death, handfuls of the good Word of God were cast in, not without yielding fruit. To preach here seemed mad enough to many, and useless enough to most. Amid such sounds and scenes it was hard to sustain the voice and maintain composure of spirit; but exhaustion, loss of voice, violent opposition, occasional peltings with stones and other missiles, mockery and scorn, only served to inflame zeal, deepen compassion, and rouse every energy in the interests of the divine glory and of the souls of men. The pains thus taken were amply rewarded in the snatching of brands from the fire. "Let us raise the banner once more," our evangelist used to say. Accordingly, after much prayer, we sallied forth with joyful hearts, and, surrounded by a little band of singers, we continued preaching, praising God, and praying till the latest hour of night. We were often assailed by "lewd fellows of the baser sort"; but in the most tumultuous moment of danger prayer never failed, and frequently at the worst a sense of the Lord's presence suddenly filled our hearts with joy, so that we spake the word with boldness.

On one occasion a burly Yorkshireman attempted to stop the preaching by driving his horses and caravan in amongst us. Matheson, who was speaking at that moment, turned his face to the adversary, and in his solemn way, thundered out these words, "Prepare to meet thy God!" The show-

man drew up his horses, listened for a few minutes, and then turning deadly pale, quickly beat a retreat.

One night a showman, thinking we had taken our stand in too close proximity to his tabernacle, fetched his magic bottle, and with a significant glance in our direction, said, "Talk of revivals! Here is something that will revive you!" Shouts of derisive laughter followed. We paused a moment, then began to sing the twenty-third Psalm. As we sung, the people began to leave the showman, and come to our side: there was a charm for them in King David's song. Prayer was offered: more of the people came over. A simple exposition of the Psalm followed: the larger portion of the showman's audience left him to hear about the green pastures and the still waters. Ere we finished the show was well-nigh deserted, and we could see the tears trickling down the cheeks of some as they listened to the story of the Good Shepherd coming into the wilderness of this world to seek and to save the lost.

Patience and love always prevailed. One Sabbath evening, at the time of the fair, we were resting ourselves in the house after a service in the open air. Suddenly four young men, maddened with strong drink, rushed into the room, and furiously assailed us, while a fierce and numerous reserve remained at the door. The object of their wrath was the person of the writer, who had reproved them in the street for scoffing. A violent struggle followed. Matheson interposed, and seizing the ringleader by the arm, said, "Let us pray." We both dropped upon our knees, and fervently entreated God to bless and save the young men. For a moment they were paralysed by astonishment or fear. Again and again, for nearly two hours, the battle was renewed; again and again we resorted to prayer, striking no blows but those of faith and love. At last the victory remained with us; the young men became as quiet as lambs. We preached the gospel to them, and ere they went away we formed an alliance of peace and friendship that has never been broken. Such incidents were not infrequent, and the result often illustrated in a striking manner the sovereignty of the grace of God. Men who were at one time leaders of the mob in their most violent attacks on us in the open-air meetings are now, as the writer can testify, ranked among

the peaceful disciples of Jesus, and distinguished for their zeal in the cause of the gospel.

One night at Perth, while we preached in the street we were set on by an infuriated crowd. We sang the hymn, "There is rest for the weary;" but as we sang matters grew worse and worse. Not contented with hooting and yelling, they rushed upon us, and gathering the dirt of the street, bespattered us freely. Matheson, who never lost his self-possession, frequently whispered in my ear, "Never mind; perhaps a soul will be saved." We continued to sing until we reached the door of the hall where a meeting was being held. Our strength exhausted, our pride in the dust, we turned to address a word of affectionate entreaty to our victorious assailants, when suddenly the Spirit of God fell upon us and upon all those people. Our hearts were filled with a new and wonderful joy, heaven seemed to be opened above us, the awful verities of eternity were disclosed with soul-piercing vividness, and with bleeding hearts we besought them all to repent and believe the gospel. At the same moment the great crowd ceased its fiendish rage and mocking; the stillness of death followed; and as we urged them to flee to Jesus from the wrath to come, many burst into tears. The people seemed ready to cast themselves at our feet as we preached Christ to them. It was a memorable night, the issues of which are with the Lord. Thus we learned that Satan rages when his kingdom shakes and his victims are about to escape.

One night at the fair in Dundee a young man bent on folly stopped for a little to hear the preaching. Stung by the truth, and angry lest he should lose his pleasures, he tore himself away, and rushed into the next street, saying, "Now I've got rid of them." Scarcely had he turned the corner, however, when he came upon another preacher, was arrested, and brought to the Saviour. A policeman on his rounds stood for a moment to hear "what in all the world those preachers could have to say in the fair," when suddenly a ray of light shot through the darkness, and he too was converted. Two young women, bent on pleasure, stopped as they pressed through the crowd to hear the singing of the hymn—

"O happy day that fixed my choice
 On Thee, my Saviour and my God!
 Well may this glowing heart rejoice,
 And tell its raptures all abroad."

"Come away," said the one to the other; "we'll be too late." "I dare na gang," was the reply.

They strove, and parted; the one going to the pleasures of death, the other remaining to seek the protection of Jesus, and to join the society of his people.

A poor woman, a drunkard's wife, steeped in poverty and clothed in rags, was coming along the street with a babe in her arms. Happiness had forsaken her long ago; desperate struggles with want made her weary of life; hope, that most patient of angels, had disappeared in the clouds; and all her days and nights seemed but steps to deeper woe. A voice strange to her fell upon her ear. The one utterance that fell like dew upon her weary heart was the word of the Lord—"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." She stood still upon the pavement, far off from the preacher; and as she listened, the voice seemed to come nearer and nearer to the heart. "Rest!" she said to herself, as the preacher went on to explain rest in the Lord Jesus—"rest! that is what I want." Jesus heard the groaning of that oppressed spirit, and came to her relief. There and then she believed on Christ; there and then she entered on the rest of the gospel. Peace and joy, like birds of Paradise, began to sing in her soul. She carried the blessing home, and the light that filled that mother's heart illuminated the drunkard's house, and transformed it into a Bethel. Years have passed; she still hearkens to Jesus, and still hears Him saying, "Come unto Me, and rest."

"I hear the voice of Jesus say,
 'Come unto Me, and rest;
 Lay down, thou weary one, lay down
 Thy head upon my breast.'

"I came to Jesus as I was,
 Weary, and worn, and sad;
 I found in Him a resting-place,
 And He has made me glad."

These are a few instances out of many: the day alone will declare all the results. To the wise and prudent the preachers might appear to be fools; but the gospel was

preached to the poor, evil was prevented, good was done, souls were saved, and God was glorified. From strange quarters, and in ways too strange to find an explanation in the philosophy of the rigidly systematic Christian, God gathers his elect. It does seem meet, that from amidst those scenes where Satan has his seat, and those ongoings where the destroyer of souls enjoys his proudest triumphs, the Redeemer should gather the trophies of his matchless grace. When in glory the ransomed shall tell each his strange story of a Saviour's love; and one shall say, "He found me in the nursery;" and another, "He found me in the school;" while others tell how they were found in the house of prayer, the sick-bed, the workshop, or the field; one will say, "He found me mad upon my idols, amidst the revels of the fair,—there He cast the charm of his love around me, and thence He drew me to Himself."

Several of the Christian helpers in this work have gone to be with the Lord. Mr. Johnstone, pastor of a Methodist church, fell like a true soldier at his post, and passed from the hallowed services of the Lord's day on earth to the joys of the everlasting Sabbath in heaven. He was mighty in prayer, and it was the practice of our evangelist to ask at the commencement of his meetings, "Is Johnstone here to pray?" Robert Annan, the stoutest of street preachers, is also at his rest. Dan Collison, a young man of remarkable faith, said one night as he left the fair, "I am gaun' hame to tell my Faither," meaning that he was going to spend the midnight hour in prayer. In a few hours afterwards he reached the Father's house of many mansions. When charged, like Paul, with madness, Dan was wont to say, "If I'm mad, I'll get heaven for an asylum." "The Luck-now Hero," a Christian soldier of gigantic stature, who had fought in the Indian mutiny, used to assist in these services by marching in front to clear the way. He could not preach, but he could help in his own way. Drawing himself up to his full height between the preachers and their opponents, he seemed to say, "If you dare meddle with these men, you see what you have to encounter." He also has received the palm of victory. Mr. Nairn, merchant, an unwearied helper in the work of the Lord, is also numbered with those who have crossed the flood. Amidst the ravings of the fever

that closed his earthly career, he spoke only of the Saviour whom he loved. Others, whose chief part was not to speak or act, but to watch and pray, we have accompanied to the border-land, and have seen them depart, leaning on the arm of their Redeemer.

Dr. W. P. Mackay, pastor of the Presbyterian church, Hull, who accompanied Mr. Matheson to the feeling-markets and assisted in the work, writes as follows:—"Among the very first times I spoke with him was at a railway station. We had been speaking of entire consecration to the Lord, and the noble work of preaching Christ and getting souls saved. My mind was not very clear as to my own path. I was seeking light as to my future course—whether I should give myself entirely up to preach the gospel or enter a professional course. Many young men are similarly placed, and often require an encouraging word when all around seems doubtful or dark. We had to go in different directions. He crossed over to the other side of the platform, and his last words before our trains came up were in his manly accents, 'Go, and read George Müller, of Ashley Down.' I had never heard the name before, but I put it down in my memory. On the first opportunity I read his history, and for the first time in my life saw the meaning of practical every-day faith. I had known about faith to save my soul, but this opened up quite a new aspect of God's glorious truth.

"Time wore on. I was often in his company, and always felt in his presence, There is a man in real earnest, and his one word is 'Eternity.' He used to say to me, 'Stick by what God has blessed to your own soul. Every evangelist has a something that God has given him as a great reality, and God uses the evangelist to carry home that truth to do his own work. One, for instance, has this word, *God is love*; another is used to impress on his audience, *It is written*; a third has to preach *Oneness with Christ*; and a fourth, *Believe and live*; and so on, just as God has burned the truth into their own souls.' 'Well, Duncan,' I said, 'What is yours?' 'Ah, mine is plain, *Death, Judgment, and Eternity*; and by God's grace I mean to hold by it.' And so he did.

“Well do I remember my first introduction to the feeing-market campaign under his guidance. It was in May, 1862. On the 13th we went to Ellon, in Aberdeenshire. Here, supported by a number of earnest pastors, we preached till nightfall the words of eternal life, Duncan’s voice reaching well over the whole fair in an earnestness all his own. Next day we went to Potarch market, up Deeside, and there we met with strong opposition. A goodly number of labourers, pastors, and evangelists—several of whom, as Major Gibson and Colonel Ramsay, are now with the Lord—drove down to the fair. This was about as hard a battle-field as we were on in all the campaign. We had had much prayer about it, but the opposition, or rather indifference, was very marked. We could hardly get a dozen at a time to listen. But Duncan was determined they should hear. ‘Come,’ said he, ‘let us blow the rams’ horns outside the city.’ We all went to the outskirts of the crowd, and knelt round in a circle, and began to pray to God, as we felt we had no power with men. Many of the men inflamed with drink came round and looked at the rare spectacle. There were more than a dozen uncovered heads of kneeling men, who were entreating God to have mercy on those who had no mercy on themselves. As the spare grey locks of several of the veterans waved in the summer breeze, and the tones of entreaty went up to the throne, there was something that seemed calculated to calm the wildest opposer; but Satan appeared let loose. They danced, and whooped, and yelled round the circle of prayer like so many fiends. One coarse fellow deliberately came beside Major Gibson and spat in his face while he was praying. The gallant soldier merely took out his handkerchief, wiped his face, and prayed for the poor sinner. We rose from our knees. ‘Now,’ said Duncan, ‘let us again unfurl the banner,’ and turning to me, he said, ‘Strike up “Rest for the weary,” and let us in to the centre of the camp.’ Then we got an audience indeed, and the word seemed to be with power. I spoke at least to two who were stricken with great conviction of sin. Duncan would not stop preaching even when the horses were being yoked to drive us from the fair, but from the conveyance preached, exhorted, and entreated sinners to come to Christ.

On Friday, the 16th, we went to Inch, where there seemed many attentive hearers, several of those who had been converted under Duncan and other labourers rallying round us. On the Monday following we were at Alford, where constant preaching went on all day, many dear brethren from Aberdeen and elsewhere taking part. I have letters in my possession from those who profess to have been benefited for eternity from this day's work, besides having seen several who had been brought to the truth at former preachings there. On Wednesday we went on to Huntly, where such wonderful things had been seen in years gone by, when Duncan, Radcliffe, and others, gathered by the Duchess of Gordon, were so owned of God in the market. Here, assisted by other brethren, the gospel was proclaimed, and there were many attentive listeners.

"On the following Friday we went to Elgin. In the train, as Duncan and I took our seats, a man sat down beside us, whom we recognised as a very prominent Cheap John in the fairs, and who we supposed was going to Elgin. He recognised us also, and said, in a very hoarse voice, 'Are you going to Elgin?' 'Yes,' said Duncan. 'Like ourselves, you seem to be very hoarse; here is a lozenge for you. But, man, if you would use that splendid voice of yours in the service of our Master instead of the service of Satan, it would be worth living for.' He was about the smartest in the whole of the markets, and he smiled at us as he took out a handful of pound notes and shook them before us, saying, 'Ay, but you could not bring me that with your preaching.' 'No,' said Duncan; 'but what shall it profit you, if you gain the whole world, and lose your soul? Ah, Jack, perhaps you had a praying mother, who took you to her side as she knelt and taught you "Our Father," and who prayed that she might meet you in heaven. Shall we not see you preaching in the markets yet? When God converts you, send for me, and I'll join you, wherever it is.' The poor fellow seemed quite solemnized, and took it all in the spirit in which it was given; but the Searcher of hearts knows if Duncan's desire was realized.

"A week after this we went to a fair in the south, upwards of a hundred miles from where we parted with Jack, and no sooner had we taken our stand than the first

man we saw was our railway friend. He immediately recognised us. He had his large hand-bell ready to begin operations, when Duncan said, 'Let us pray.' The man stopped his bell, bowed his head until the prayer was done, and then began to scatter coppers to draw a crowd. Coppers were, of course, more attractive than the gospel of eternal life, and so he gathered the large crowd, and we the small; but Jack, noticing this, and, as if not to interfere with our work, wheeled his platform away to the furthest end of the fair, and left us undisturbed.

"Duncan had a rare gift of getting respect from even the unconverted by his manly, open-faced manner. The lame sailors, with their shipwreck picture before them, and other itinerant beggars, lifted their hats to him as he gave them a word of warning and gospel.

"From Elgin we went to Turriff, and met with considerable opposition, but also considerable attention to the gospel preached. In private we had a meeting on our knees here, that brought us so closely into the presence of the Master, and showed us the worthlessness of all flesh, that it will never be forgotten by many of us.

"These scenes happened eight years ago, and it is difficult to recall particulars; but many will have to thank God through eternity for having raised up Duncan Matheson, who with living voice and his *Special Herald* carried salvation home to their souls. It is a noble and fruitful work. One man came to us saying, 'I at least hear the gospel once a year, and that is at the fair.' Another said, rather from sarcasm than anything else, 'Your sermons here seem to have nothing in them but Christ. It seems to me that you can speak of nothing else but Christ—Christ from beginning to end. Ye let us hear more about Christ than we get in a whole year.'

"Duncan used often to say, 'Keep the Word at them;' and when he could scarcely be heard in a continued discourse he launched out short, pithy, telling texts of Scripture. As a man would be pushing his merchandise, he would sound in the ears of buyer and seller, who were thinking of profits, 'What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?' He would come in front of a man being weighed for a penny, and in his solemn tones and earnest manner, making

the man tremble all over, he would say, 'Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.'

"Many other places we visited in company during the happy years I had the privilege to labour with him; but I have no doubt you have fuller information than I can give. His warfare was no easy warfare. He never thought of rest. 'Rest!' said he, 'no, I can't. Eternity! eternity! I'll rest there; and you can gather the northern converts, and over my grave sing, "*Rest for the weary.*"' Often he got the opposite of a kind reception, of course, as did his Master. At one place we were going to get our tea at a temperance hotel. A woman came after us, saying, 'You shall not go there as long as I have a house;' and she did give us a hearty reception. He was too independent of men's smiles or frowns to be universally acceptable. He rejoiced to do God's work in God's way. The water of life flows as a river, not as a canal; and many men quench the Spirit by determining the exact shape, depth, and width of the canal, instead of taking the winding, irregular river as God sends it.

"The life of Duncan Matheson may well stir us all up to live more in the light of eternity, working to please but One, working to gather souls to that glorious One, and build them up in the knowledge of Him who is the light of eternity."

For two or three years—from 1862 to 1865—there was a slight and natural reaction in many places where a real work of grace had been wrought. This lull was not pleasant, but it was profitable. Heaps of stones having been gathered from the quarry, the work of selection and rejection, polishing and building, had to be carried on. Reaping, with its sunshine and its songs, is delightful work; but after it comes the work of the barn, with its din, its dust, and its stern process of separating the chaff from the wheat. At the same time new fields were opening to the indefatigable evangelist; slumbering communities here and there were moved by the voice of the awakening Spirit. During those years his labours were without ceasing. "We must not lower the standard" was his constant saying. If the field was ever widening, his power for work seemed to grow in equal measure. Wherever a religious interest was awakening he hastened to render help. Where no work was wrought

and no testimony raised, true captain of the forlorn hope as he was, thither he bent his steps, and there, to use his own martial style, he "unfurled the banner." He was seldom at home. One evening, before a meeting, he said to his wife, "Mary, this is a royal night with you. How long is it since you took tea with me on a Sabbath evening?" "Just three times the last three years," was her reply. Solemnly and tenderly he said, "There will be plenty of opportunity in eternity to speak together." At another time he said, "Wife and children must be nailed to the cross; I must go and preach the gospel."

In carrying on the work he was opposed on various grounds. A minister of the gospel in a certain town was accustomed to offer prayer for a revival of religion. The great awakening in America took place; but it was "too American," and the minister went on praying as before. The work of grace in Ireland followed; but it was "too Irish," and he went on praying as before. Remarkable movements occurred in various parts of Scotland; but it was "wild-fire, and he would have none of it." The Spirit of God began to work in his own town, very much through the instrumentality of our evangelist; but in the opinion of the minister the instruments were contemptible, and the whole thing of doubtful tendency, and he now began to pray for a *true* revival. At length members of his own congregation were converted under the preaching of Mr. Matheson, who said to them, "Go and tell your minister what the Lord has done for your souls; it will cheer his heart, and do him good." They went; some to ask direction, and some to acknowledge grace received. The minister was angry. Next Sabbath he said it was all excitement and delusion, and he stamped with his foot as if he would stamp out the spiritual rinderpest. The excitement and delusion seemed to be all his own. His prayer had been answered; but he would not accept the answer in God's way. The work of grace stood before him, but he knew it not. Jesus came to his own, but his own received Him not, because his visage was so marred. The Holy Spirit came to the minister, but the minister disowned and rejected Him because He came in a garb of humiliation offensive to human pride. A work of grace without a flaw must be an impos-

sibility so long as God is pleased to work by means of imperfect tools on the corrupt material of human hearts and lives. The minister would accept no revival but one according to his own ideal. What a pity that ministers should go a dreaming when the world is perishing!

Some opposed the work because they had no scruples of conscience, and others because they had too many. Certain religious people have more scruples in their conscience than conscience in their scruples. To those who in effect said, "Sermons, sermons are our business," his reply was, "Souls, souls are mine." His constant cry, "Eternity! eternity! souls are perishing!" was a cutting rebuke to mere sermon-makers and sermon-hearers. He did not practise trumpet-blowing for a bit of bread. His was not the soft serenading of lovers, but the sounding of shrill battle blasts. He refused to say, "Peace! peace!" when he ought to cry, "Fire! fire!" To gratify carnal tastes, he would not put the devil's butter on God's bread. In this way he offended both the lullaby players and the lullaby lovers. Moreover, his zeal sometimes carried him beyond the bounds of prudence; and Mr. Perfectly Small—the same who is denounced in an ancient prophet for making a man an offender for a word—could not tolerate the evangelist on account of his blunders. Does he never blunder himself? No; no more than a periwinkle blunders. Small, heartless men do not usually blunder so much as men of much feeling and soul. Heartless people keep to the arithmetic of everything. But love, zeal, courage, feeling, heart, soul, rise above vulgar-fraction rules of mere carnal policy. Some men can gauge the tear of penitence, and weigh as in a balance the breath of a dying saint. There is a crow's nest in the great oak; therefore, hew down the tree. There is a cobweb in a cornice; rase the temple to its foundation. The watch-dog barks out of season; slay him. There is a crook in the furrow; hang the ploughman. Let a man live a holy life; let him toil for the good of others till life is shortened by his self-denying labours; and let the broad seal of heaven be stamped upon his work; yet one word amiss shall, in the estimate of some, outweigh the whole. Shall a single particle of dust outweigh and render of no value a hundred talents of fine gold? Well, shall the warrior stop the battle because

the grasshopper is chirping? I trow not. So this soldier of the cross went on.

At this time a handsome offer was made him by the Presbyterian Church in New Zealand. They proposed to ordain him as their first missionary, with the status of a minister in the Presbytery, and offered him a suitable salary. This offer he declined. Ordination by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery he did not despise; and although to a high-spirited man, such as he in the best sense was, with an increasing family, a stated income was to be preferred to his uncertain and precarious mode of living, with its inevitable humiliations, he could not leave his own country, where his labours were so much blessed, and over whose spiritual necessities his patriotic and Christian spirit brooded with a singular love. "So long as God is blessing my labours here in the conversion of sinners," he said, "I cannot on any account go away."

During the rest of his active ministry his work, both in its character and results, was very much of a piece. A few facts, therefore, in illustration will suffice. To gather the people in obscure and out-of-the-way places, he procured a hand-bell, which he was not ashamed to ring up and down the streets, announcing to the astonished inhabitants that he, the bell-ringer, was going to preach at the cross or market-place. Curiosity brought many to hear him; and frequently those most unlikely, in man's estimate, to come under the power of the gospel were awakened and saved. The bell-ringing and similar devices he felt to be a humiliation, and he sometimes said, "I never knew I had so little grace till I began to do that."

One summer evening the quiet little mining village of Stevenston, in Ayrshire, is startled from its centre to its circumference by a strange voice, whose loud sonorous tones waken the echoes and compel men to ask, What is this? The people rush to their doors; a hundred windows are thrown open, and the heads of eager listeners are thrust out. Even the public-house is emptied of the drunkards, who come out in stark amazement. The stranger, like Jonah in Nineveh, has come no one knows whence. He stands alone, calm, bold, and solemn, as if he had just come out of eternity. With prophet-like authority, he cries, "Pre-

pare to meet thy God!" As night falls, the voice waxes louder and louder, and many of those rough miners tremble. The service closes with an appeal to the great I AM, and the people somehow feel they are in the presence of God as they have never been. The preacher then takes his way along the street, and improves the awakening interest by speaking of Christ and eternity to every man, woman, and child, as they stand at their doors. Coming to the public-house, he goes up and says with great tenderness, "Ah, men, prepare to meet your God!" Words cannot describe the feelings of the villagers that night. The whole affair is so novel, so unexpected, so conscience-moving. It was as if God had suddenly come to the village, as He was then coming to many a village in the land. What was too little considered, He was come not to stay, but to pass on.

In another mining village, known to the writer, he was violently opposed by a band of infidel mockers, who came to the meetings for the purpose of turning the evangelist and the work into ridicule. For a time, it seemed as if they should carry everything their own way. Strong in the hardness of their hearts and their unholy league, they laughed and jeered. The evangelist marked their conduct, and having offered prayer for their conversion, drew his bow at a venture. One of the scoffers was arrested and turned to Christ. Henceforth he separated himself from his companions, who only seemed to grow more profane. Next night they returned to the meeting to scoff. Again one of those high-handed sinners was prostrated by grace, and the mocker began to pray. Again and again was this advanced guard of Satan thinned by the sword of the Spirit, till at length only one remained, and he the worst of all. It seemed as if he would hold out. At last, however, the thought took possession of him, "Am I to be left to go to hell alone?" That led to his conversion. This triumph of grace made a profound impression on the unconverted people of the district, and the work of God made remarkable progress at that time, the fruits of which are strikingly apparent at the present day.

He found his way into places where gates were barred against all evangelistic effort. "You need not attempt to go there," said his friends, speaking of a certain country

town in the north. "The ministers have told the people that the revival is a delusion; nobody wants you, and you will get none to hear you." Not discouraged by the failure of attempts made by others, he resolved to go. After praying for a blessing, he went, hired a hall for a week, announced his meetings, and commenced at the appointed hour. Not a soul appeared: undisputed victory seemed to remain with spiritual apathy. Most men would have looked on the empty hall as an intimation of the will of God to depart and seek a more promising field; but our evangelist opened his book, and saying, "Let us praise God," sang one of David's psalms, with somewhat of David's spirit. Thereafter he said, "Let us pray," and proceeded to pray aloud, as if all the town were there. As the prayer was closing, a little boy dropped in, and sat down with all a child's wonder and simplicity. The Word was read, the text announced, and the sermon preached, the great voice ringing and reverberating strangely in the empty hall. Ere the close, two or three men came stealing in from sheer curiosity, to see "a man preaching to nobody," and sat as near the door as they could. The service ended, and the preacher announced that having made an engagement with the great God to meet Him for prayer, praise, and preaching of his gospel in that hall on every night of the week, he would be there, God helping him, at the same hour on the following evening, come what might, come who may. Next night more came from curiosity, and ere the week closed the hall was crowded by an attentive, and in some instances awakened audience. Faith triumphed. Bolts and bars of triple steel gave way before the invisible artillery of believing prayer. Our evangelist once more realized our Saviour's words—"All things are possible to him that believeth."

In another part of the country, the name of which I forbear to mention, an extraordinary power attended the word one night. The distress of the awakened was exceeding great, and the individual who presided at the meeting, becoming alarmed, ordered the people to retire to their own homes. It seemed a hard case for those weeping enquirers to be sent away without an opportunity being afforded them of stating their difficulties and hearing an answer to the great question then and there. The meeting-house was

cleared, and as the key turned heavily in the lock, these unsophisticated children of the soil stood about the door and wept. "Go home," it was said to them. "Go home!" they exclaimed. "We are going down to hell; and what are we to do?" Seizing the arm of the evangelist and his companion, they begged them as servants of Jesus Christ not to leave them. That night the woods resounded with their cries to God for mercy as they went away.

Duncan's labours were much blessed at Hillhead, a mining district near Glasgow, where there was a considerable movement in 1865. This place has been singularly favoured of the Lord. Here that Christ-like missionary, David Sandeman, preached and prayed and wept for souls. Sometimes he tarried at the throne of grace all night, and towards dawn he could be heard saying, "The whole district, Lord,—the whole district! I cannot ask less." "He made everybody love him," say the people still. Here too James Allan, who, like David Sandeman, went to an early rest with Jesus, preached with Baptist-like solemnity and power. Of him the people say, "He brocht eternity doon about us." It was Matheson's privilege largely to reap what these faithful men and other earnest labourers still living had sown in the unpromising soil of Hillhead. Night after night he continued the services there amidst striking displays of divine grace. At the close of the meetings, often near the hour of midnight, when he tore himself away from the group of men in the agony of conviction, he trudged his weary way for miles through the deep snow to the neighbouring city of Glasgow, where necessity compelled him to lodge. Next night, however, invariably found him back at his loved work as cheery as ever.

His circuit was now a very extensive one. At one time—July, 1864—we find him preaching at Dover, where several officers of the army are converted, and ere the month is out he is in the extreme north labouring amongst the highlanders at the herring-fishing at Wick. Now he is raising his voice on Glasgow Green, where during the last ten or twelve years many a soul has been saved; by and by he is ranging the lonely glens of Sutherland in search of the lost sheep. Here the proclamation of free grace is blessed. "I have heard that Mr. Matheson was riding very high, that he was preach-

ing *assurance* to the people of —," said a pastor, who seemed to think that the Christian is safe only under the shadow of Doubting Castle. "Is it not a matter about which we should be sure?" was the reply. "Oh, you women!" was all the good man had to say in defence of his system of ultra-Calvinistic exclusiveness.

In 1856, when lying at the point of death on the scene of his exhausting labours among the soldiers in the East, he had asked from his God ten years more of life to preach the gospel and win souls. He was now entering the tenth and last year; and as if conscious that his more active career was about to close, he inserted in a newspaper the following address:—

1866.

NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS.

DEAR READER,—The sand-glass is running out. Another year is *gone!* Three hundred and sixty-five days past! How silently—yet how quickly again—has grain after grain, particle after particle, hour after hour, dropped in this glass. Deathless hours they are; uncounted, unnoted, and forgotten it may be by man, but every falling grain has been noted by God. The busy pen of Heaven has been marking every moment. Ask thyself the searching question, "Has it been with me a *happy* year? It has brought me nearer Eternity; but has it brought me nearer God? Does it find me better fitted for Heaven, with more of the *pilgrim spirit* than I had when the year began?"

What a time for serious thought! Another new year summons thee to a Pisgah-Mount—from the top of one of life's memorable eminences solemnly to review time past—consider time present—and prepare for time to come. Cast, then, thine eye on the past year's journey, and how full of impressive recollections is the retrospect!

God has been dealing with *thee* individually, and speaking to thee surely, in language not to be misunderstood. Hearest thou not the rustling wings of the Angel of Death? Have not his arrows been flying fast and thick, and thousands made his victims? Look back! Seest thou that crowd of fresh-made graves?—they are silent preachers to *thee!* and this is their silent text and sermon, "*Be ye also ready.*"

Many of those who slumber underneath these sods were cut down without a note of preparation. One was busied in the market-place; the Angel of Judgment met him *there*, and before evening he was DEAD! Another was seated at his fireside, planning bright thoughts and schemes for the future—he

never saw the morrow's sun. Another was in company, loud in godless merriment, and breathing out his blasphemies—a few hours more, and he was arraigned at *the bar of God!* Another flung himself prayerless on his nightly pillow—next morning he awoke—but it was—in ETERNITY!

And, reader, has He spared *thee*? What! cut down others and left *thee* to count in the review of a past year—fig-tree after fig-tree blighted and fallen—and yet *thyself*, the most “barren” of all—a fruitless cumberer—still “*spared!*”

Canst thou calculate on another year? Let these green graves answer. *Another* year! Thine own grave may be among the number of these silent preachers on another anniversary. Who can tell but the summons may even now be on the wing, “Get thee up and die!” *Thou* mayest this time next year be reading to others the solemn lesson now read to thyself, “The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.”

Dear reader, if this be a *possible* thing, take one look *forward*. If the arrow of death were indeed during this coming year to mark *thee* out, how would it fare with thee? Couldst thou say with exulting Paul, when he had the prospect of death before him, “I am NOW ready”? (2 Tim. iv. 6.) Are you at peace with God? Are you resting your eternal all on his dear Son? Are you in that blessed state of holy weanedness from *this* world, and holy preparedness for another and a better, that “living or dying” you can say and feel that “you are Christ’s”?

Would the angel-summons, “Behold! the Bridegroom cometh,” find you exclaiming in joyous rapture, “Even so! come Lord Jesus! come quickly”? Would you be ready to pass from a death full of hope to a judgment divested of all terror—a God reconciled—an immortality of endless glory? These are solemn things and solemn thoughts! Answer them on thy knees—with the solemnities of the past year *behind* thee—an unseen God *above* thee—a great eternity *before* thee. Answer them *speedily!*

And as ye begin to descend the mount and commence the journey of a new year, let the feeble voice of the old one whisper its dying accents in thine ear, “Seek ye the Lord *while* He may be found: call ye upon Him *while* He is near;” for He who testifieth these things saith, “*Behold I come quickly!*”

“Time is earnest, passing by;
Death is earnest, drawing nigh;
Sinner, wilt thou trifling be?
Time and death appeal to thee!
Christ is earnest, bids thee ‘Come;’
Paid for man a priceless sum!
Wilt thou spurn the Saviour’s love
Pleading with thee from above?”

INSERTED BY D. MATHESON.

Perth, Jan. 1, 1866.

Early in the year we find him in the north-west Highlands, whence he writes :

“Balmacara House, Lochalsh, January 5th, 1866. I am here! What a place of beauty, yet of tempest and storm! I left Dingwall yesterday in an open gig, and came on here through a range of mountains covered all the way with snow. Now and then it was grand going along lake sides and then down mountain steepes. It was very cold, and we had at the end of our journey very heavy showers. I am none the worse. I think we came sixty-five miles in an open gig. When I reached, the thunder was rolling and lightning flashing. The rain fell in torrents. In summer it must be a glorious place. The people are scattered, and my work is laid out for next week. May the Lord guide! Captain O——, his wife, her sister, and daughter, are here. They are kind to me. He is a good, good man. My work will not be amongst large companies, for few understand English. Pray that the Lord may bless my efforts. I have a meeting to-night, and to-morrow, Sabbath, here.

“Balmacara House, January 8th. Yesterday Mr. Colville joined us. We drove to church—a most uncomfortable one. No plaster, no roof—only the bare boards, no flooring. The minister is a good man. It was a good sermon. We drove back, singing all the way till the very hills rang again. At five we dined, and at seven we met in a shed. It was packed with people, some having come six or eight miles. I preached first, and then Mr. Colville. The people were intensely interested, and about twenty waited after the meeting. At ten o'clock we left. We meet there to-night again. It is a poor, poor country, but very beautiful to look upon. You see nothing but green mountains and mountains covered with snow. I am to be very busy. I wish you were here. I always like you to see anything that is grand.

“January 9th. We are working away. The people seem very dead. It is a lovely spot; but how sad to see people going down to hell unmoved! I feel deeply for the people, but as yet have no power. . . . Oh for a blessing! Life is ebbing fast away. Eternity is near. Pray for me.

“January 10th. At 4 p.m. yesterday we started with the carriage over the hills. It was a grand drive. Now and then we had to come out and walk, as the hills were so

steep. Coming to a ferry, we crossed, singing all the way in the boat. In a village on the other side we got a school, and held a meeting, Mr. C—— and Captain O—— with me. I preached; and, blessed be God, I had great freedom and power. The Lord helped me. I was happy in my soul. Mr. C—— followed. In the second meeting we saw awakened souls.

“January 13th. I have to go some six miles over the hills to Plockton, the place of my father’s birth. I have seen some poor highland girls here. It would be a good thing to get places for them; they are so faithful and trustworthy. Poor things, I feel for them. In the snow many of them have no shoes. I am glad I am come to this place. I have seen much of the country and people. It shows me the value of my work among the highlanders.” The work to which he here refers was chiefly the religious books which he was getting translated into Gaelic, and circulated freely, or sold at a mere nominal price, throughout the Highlands.

In course of the summer we find him in Nairn, Inverness, Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness. Returning south, he preaches at the fair in Glasgow; and from that city he proceeds to Laurencekirk, Bervie, Kirriemuir, and other places in the eastern and central counties.

On August 4th he went to Forfar, whence he writes:—
“I have only fifteen minutes, passing through. We had good meetings last night, open-air and indoors. I hope God blessed the word; but the place is hard, and the people sadly indifferent. The whole land seems at ease. Few are seeking God; few are caring for God. I often feel it deeply. Cholera is not apparently decreasing. The voice is loud and solemn. Nothing, however, will do but the Holy Ghost.

For Forfar he had often prayed. Frequently, as he passed it by rail, he raised his voice in prayer for the salvation of its people. “When I die,” he said, “you will find Forfar written on my heart.” “If God would only bless Forfar,” he said, characteristically, “I would be content to stand and hold Harrison Ord’s hat while he preached.” His prayers were now to be answered, and his longings in measure gratified. Early in September he went to Forfar, took lodgings, obtained the use of a school-room for his meetings, and

commenced in the open air and within doors. For paying the necessary expenses means were liberally furnished by Christian gentlemen whose sole interest in this town was the salvation of the lost.

"Forfar, Monday, September 10th, 1866. Praise the Lord, He has begun his work. We commenced at seven on the street on Saturday. A great crowd gathered round. They listened breathlessly. It was a blessed meeting. I have seldom seen such a solemn meeting on the streets. At eight we went to the school. A good company were present. At close some waited in anxiety to be spoken with. We did not leave till ten.

"Yesterday Hopkins, Boswell, and I, went through the streets giving tracts and speaking. We had solemn talk with the people. At six we met on the green. About one thousand were present. God helped us all wondrously. He gave a very solemn address. The people hung on our lips. We then went to church. About four hundred came. It was a very solemn meeting. Rarely did I ever feel such power at a meeting. About a hundred remained to the second meeting. Some ten or twelve were really anxious. We could hardly get the church cleared. Mr. C——, who had been preaching in a village, came and had a meeting for the anxious in the street. Some one asked them in. He had to speak till eleven o'clock. Some evidently found the Lord. Is it not blessed? I praise the Lord. The Lord send floods. It is sweet to see such fruit at first.

"September 13th. What a night we had last night. I shall never forget it. We met at one o'clock, and spoke in a small street; at seven H. Ord at the Cross, and Hopkins and I took another place. We then collected all into a school. It was packed. At close, going out, they laughed, swore, and mocked. Within we spoke to anxious souls, a few: and outside I tried to control the rabble. Oh, how obscene they were! It seemed as if the devil had entered into them. At ten o'clock we could hardly get the gate shut. We go to Mr. M'Phail's church to-night, as the school is too small. This is a fearful place. No tongue can tell its sin. I do pray that God may convert many. Nothing is too hard for Him.

"September 14th. The work goes on. God will work

here yet, I do believe, wondrously. We wait, we long, we pray.

"September 18th. We had good meetings last night. We only want more power,—more power from on high. A breath would fan much that is now smouldering into a flame. We had some anxious ones last night. Pray for me, and very specially for Forfar. The time is short. It is passing away. It will soon be done. Some thirty attend our daily prayer-meeting at noon.

"October 3rd. We had a blessed meeting last night. I was very ill yesterday, but to-day am quite well. It was a very solemn meeting, and several were brought to peace at close. One, a farmer's daughter, was a very decided case. All yesterday I had much freedom. The work here is truly a very decided one. We find every night some new cases. It is a great thing to get something to cheer. Oh, rejoice in the blessing descending! We have trial, but we have many blessings. We shall have a kingdom yet and a crown of glory.

"October 15th. We had a very remarkable night at the Cross on Saturday. About one thousand came to hear. We went to the school at eight o'clock. Last night (Sabbath) was a great night in the church—great every way. I had much freedom. Truly the Lord spoke through me. *I never left a place with such regret, never in twenty years.* The work seems only beginning."

In November he went north to the feeing-markets, and on his return visited Forfar, to find precious and abundant fruits of his trying labours there. The end of the year found him at home, making preparations for an evangelistic journey to the Orkneys.

CHAPTER VIII.

HIS MANNER OF LIVING AND MODE OF WORKING



URING the last years of his active life our evangelist prosecuted his work with unflagging zeal. He never rested save when he slept. He was often weary; but the more he was spent in the service of Jesus, the more he loved the work. Indecision never brought him

to a standstill. The silken cords of sloth never detained him. Every minute was an opportunity, and every opportunity was seized with an almost stern promptitude. Through the grace given him he could say, "I do not know that ten minutes of my life ever pass without thinking of the salvation of souls." His motto was, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest." Often, when exhausted and sick, did he say, "Ah, I know the deep meaning of those words, 'There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God;'" and the hope of that rest roused him, weary and ill though he was, to fresh efforts in the work of the Lord. Let us see how he spent his days.

The first part of the morning was given to prayer and reading the Word. Thus he refreshed his own spirit, and found a portion for others. To Christians he happened to meet he was wont to say, "Here is a sweet morsel for you,—I have been rolling it like candy-sugar in my mouth all the day." The portions of scripture in which he found comfort were sometimes such as would not readily occur to others. For example, he would say, "I cannot tell you how much comfort I have found in this word, 'If the righteous *scarcely* be saved.' I find it so hard for me to be saved that I often fear I will never get into the kingdom; but then when I read that those who are saved are saved with difficulty, with just such a struggle as I have, I feel encouraged."

In the earlier years of his course he spent part of the morning in sketching or writing fully out his sermons and addresses. A specimen of his outlines may be given:—

FOLLOWING AFAR OFF.

"But Peter followed Him afar off." (Matt. xxvi. 58.)

I. Point out those that follow Christ afar off. 1. Those who have some love, but grace is weak. 2. Those who are ashamed to confess Christ before men. 3. Those who walk inconsistently. 4. Those who do not heartily promote Christ's cause.

II. The causes of following Christ afar off. 1. Weakness

of faith. 2. Fear of man. 3. Attachment to earthly things. 4. Self-confidence.

III. The sin and danger of following Christ afar off. 1. It is not honourable. 2. It is not reasonable. 3. It is not comfortable. 4. It is not safe.

Part of his time was daily occupied in letter-writing. A benighted soul needs direction, a young convert needs warning, a persecuted Christian needs encouragement, a backslider needs healing, a poor saint needs money, a fellow-labourer needs succour: short, incisive, business-like notes winged with light are quickly on their way. In one letter he pleads the case of a neglected and poverty-stricken sufferer whom he has discovered in some out-of-the-way hovel. In another he offers to find means for building a bridge over a highland stream far away in the north, and as he urges the prosecution of the work with the greatest earnestness, you would fancy, if you did not know the man, that the erection was a matter of pecuniary interest to him, instead of being, as it was, an affair of pure benevolence. In all his letters he seems to breathe the air of eternity. "Oh, how near eternity seems!" is his constant exclamation. Death, judgment, heaven, and hell are realities never lost sight of; and in the fore-front of every epistle, however brief, stands the name of the Master, too dear to be ever forgotten by the fond disciple,—JESUS CHRIST, Saviour of sinners. It is not too much to say that by his letters, so prompt, wise, affectionate, full of the Spirit and of eternity, he was instrumental in conveying light and comfort to thousands.

His publications, and the circulation of books and tracts, formed part of his daily care and work, both at home and in his evangelistic journeys. Whenever or wherever you met him, you found him bringing out or putting into circulation some fresh tract or book. He studied the signs of the times. None knew better than he the tastes of his countrymen and the wants of the day. For instance, he brought out a cheap edition of Hoge's "Blind Bartimeus," and got it circulated in many thousands during the widespread awakening of 1859-61. He took the pains, and risk too, of getting it translated into Gaelic; and "Blind Bartimeus" was sent up many a highland glen, and into

many a sequestered nook, to tell of Him who openeth the eyes of the blind, and saith in his love to every needy child of man, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" His edition of Brooks' "Cabinet of Choice Jewels" was seasonable and useful. For example, it was instrumental in the conversion of a young man who is now a zealous Sabbath-school teacher and elder in the Free Church. At one time we find him printing and circulating 300,000 tracts ringing with the genuine truth of the gospel. Of this kind of literature, in fact, he circulated whole tons. He procured the translation into Gaelic of many little books which were gratuitously distributed, or sold at a merely nominal price.

To bring the gospel before the eyes of careless men he frequently devised new methods. For instance, immense placards with "The Two Roads" described, being the substance of a discourse on the wide and strait gates, met your eye everywhere in town and country. I have seen it on the wall of a populous town in the strange company of quack advertisements and theatre bills, and have heard one passer-by say to another, "Stop, Jim, here's a new style o't." They stopped, and read the old gospel in a new style. I have seen it hanging up in a saw-mill in the corner of a dense wood in a wild highland glen, where all who trafficked in timber read its sharp, soul-piercing truths amidst the dust and noise. It found its way into the ploughman's bothy. "What are you doing?" said one to a couple of ploughmen in F——shire, who, with hoe in hand, were scraping the walls of their bothy. "Ou, sir," was the reply, "we're just scrapin' aff the deevil's sangs, and we're gaun to put up Christ's in their place." At this juncture the foreman making his appearance angrily forbade their proceeding further in the ornamentation of the walls, but the men stoutly made reply, "'Deed, you never said a word again' oor swearin' and singin' coorse sangs, and surely you'll nae hinner's frae worshipping' and praisin' God! Na, na; we'll dae naething o' the sort as stop. We'll hae doon the deevil's sangs, and put up Christ's." "The Two Roads," with sundry hymns and spiritual songs were then pasted in the most conspicuous places.

He was watchful against the spread of error. Of all he

ever published it would be difficult to find a sentence that could be fairly construed to mean error, or be held as likely to mislead a soul. Every little book had its mission; every tract was a messenger sent in the name of God. One was to awaken and alarm; another was to warn and reprove. a third was to persuade and win; a fourth summoned to decision; a fifth was fitted to comfort and sanctify; and all were sent forth in the name of Christ to seek and save the lost. Taking into account the quality and quantity of the seed, the breadth of deeply-furrowed soil that was sown in those days, when God's great ploughshare was running sharply through the fallow ground and virgin soil of Scotland amidst sweet April-like alternations of sunshine and shower that then gladdened our happy land, it may be safely affirmed that the fruits could have been neither few nor small.

All the profits of the publishing business went to the gratuitous circulation of the particular tract or book then in hand. Although the entire burden lay on himself, his admirable business capacity and methodic habits enabled him to keep his accounts with perfect accuracy, and thus amidst a multitude of affairs to avoid confusion, if not also loss. It was but a subordinate part of his evangelistic work. The risk, indeed, was considerable, and the labour immense; but he sought no recompence save the reward that shines afar, and shines only to the clear eye of faith.

A portion of the day was invariably spent in visiting the sick, the aged, and the friendless. For this kind of work he possessed a peculiar fitness, and in it he found a peculiar joy. "You will miss your friend Mr. Matheson," I said to a Christian couple of feeble health and straitened circumstances. "'Deed, sir," was the reply, "we'll miss him sair. He had a gey traffic wi' us, an' he was aye sae cheery. An' mair than that, his hand was aye as ready wi' his ain siller as his tongue was wi' God's promises. Mony a time he cam' in an' got's greetin', an' he was sure to leave's laughin'. *He's* past the mournin' noo; he's weel hame, an' we a' maun try an' win hame tae. But 'deed, sir, we'll miss him sair." Into many a garret and cellar he carried the sunshine of an unclouded cheerfulness. His divinity was always served out with much humanity. Rare humours of fancy mingled with his spiritual sayings, and seemed no

more out of place than children playing under the shadow of a great cathedral, or birds singing in a churchyard. As playful winds, seemingly of little use in nature, precede the genial rain, so his drolleries prepared the way for those tender touches of the deeper heart that call forth tears. Heavenly thoughts arrayed in symbols of the earth imparted interest to his talk. His conversation—proverbial, quaint, suggestive, always genial and often powerful—was scarcely less useful than his preaching.

To a timid young Christian he said, "Be what God meant you to be—a man." To one whom he deemed unpractical he said, "Be real." To a flighty one, "The Lord will clip your wings some day." To a newly-married couple, "Mind this: A man canna grow in grace unless his wife let him." To students preparing for the ministry, "Lads, tak' a guid grip o' God; an advice which some of them appear to have laid to heart. To warn them against the deadening effect of classical studies he said, "Mind, Christ was crucified between Greek and Latin." To a student who seemed to him to be in danger of intellectual pride he said, "W——, *intellect* is the rock you'll split on." If that student, now in a high position in the church, has not made shipwreck, his safety may be in measure due to the advice of his outspoken friend. To a preacher who had crochets he said, "B——, preach *Christ*." To one who was becoming a separatist: "You are doing the very thing Satan desires. If he cannot destroy a child of God, he will cripple him and destroy his usefulness." To a Baptist disposed to make too much of the water he said, "Labour to bring sinners to *the blood*."

To a Christian complaining of coldness: "You are cold because you are going away from the fire: keep nearer *Christ*." To young converts he would often say, "Keep about Christ's hand." "Few Christians shine; be you a shining one." "If you wish to get *far ben* in heaven, keep near Christ on earth." "You'll aye get what you go in for," was his homely way of stating an important principle of the divine administration.

To a desponding believer he said, "What would you sell your hope for?" "I would not sell my hope for worlds," was the reply. "Well, then," said he, "you are very rich, and need not droop." "Oh, but I am so dead!" said

another. "I never heard the dead complain in that way," was his reply.

A lady, an earnest Christian worker, whose creed is summed up in these three articles, "I believe in heaven, I believe in hell, and I believe in the third chapter of the gospel according to John," said to him one day, "Ah, Mr. Matheson, I have lost my peace and my hope ; I fear I am going to perish." His reply was characteristic : "What ! you perish ? I tell you, woman, if you went to hell, the devil would say, 'What is that woman doing here, aye speaking about her Christ ? Put her out, put her out, put her out !'" Curiously enough, that reply brought a relief to her mind which much reading, prayer, and conference with ministers and other godly friends had failed to supply.

To young religious professors he said, with much feeling and solemnity, "I often fear lest I turn out at the judgment day to be nothing but a hypocrite." That was his way of warning them, and in some cases I know it took effect. More than one of those young Christians, awe-stricken, went home to search and abase themselves before God, and so were saved from the perils of self-confidence, if not also from delusions that ruin the soul. The fear of being a hypocrite, I firmly believe, was the only fear Duncan Matheson ever knew.

He had no idea of the uneducated lay-preacher affecting to be the fine gentleman or the clergyman. Meeting two young lay-evangelists, he said, "So you have become grand gentlemen," glancing at the same time at their new and finely-polished walking-canes. "Away with these showy things, and be like your Master." To another he said, "L——, when did you become a minister ?" "I am not a minister," was the reply. "Well then," said he, "put away your white necktie, and just be what you are, no more, no less." Then thrusting a piece of gold into the young evangelist's hand, he said in his kindest tone, "This is to help to pay your expenses. I am not able to preach, and I must be doing something for Jesus." These are little matters, but they serve to show with what godly jealousy he watched over his younger brethren, and how keen was his eye to discern the first step of pilgrims into Bye-path Meadow.

In a certain place where evangelistic meetings were being held, the lay-preachers, among whom was Mr. Matheson, were sumptuously entertained at the house of a Christian gentleman. After dinner they went to the meeting, not without some difference of opinion as to the best method of conducting the services of the evening. "The Spirit is grieved; He is not here at all, I feel it," said one of the younger, with a whine which somewhat contrasted with his previous unbounded enjoyment of the luxuries of the table. "Nonsense," replied Matheson, who hated all whining and morbid spirituality; "nothing of the sort. You have just eaten too much dinner, and you feel heavy."

He had learned how to abound and how to suffer want; and he once said, "I have observed during all those years of evangelistic labour, that invariably when I have enjoyed most blessing in the work, I have suffered the greatest hardships; and, on the other hand, when I have been dined, and feasted, and carried shoulder high, there has been little good done." He who is to be instrumental in gathering in the elect of God must taste of Gethsemane and Calvary. Christ's tools are tempered in a hot furnace and sharpened on a hard grindstone. Luxury and ease are bad oils for the chariot wheels of the gospel.

Speaking of the encouragement given by the Master to a young evangelist who was rejoicing in his first success, Matheson said, "The Lord gives these young soldiers victory without a wound; but when *we* are leaving a place we get a shot in the back to keep us humble and remind us that the glory belongs to Him." He was very tolerant of the faults of young converts. "The Lord winks at their blunders and foibles because they don't know better," he would say. "Let them sing away; God Himself will teach them other tunes."

"There is no use in your coming here," it was said to him in a certain place; "for the people won't come out to hear the ministers themselves." "Well then," was his reply, "if they will not come out to hear broadcloth, I will put on fustian." He was right.

Of pointless and unfaithful preaching, however pleasant to the ear or agreeable to the intellectual taste, he always said, "It is just Nero fiddling when Rome is burning."

"That was an excellent discourse," said he one day, after hearing a sermon, "but the meshes were too wide, and the fish would all get through." On hearing a certain preacher praised as being a fine speaker, he said, "Ay, but has he teeth?" He often quoted a saying of the celebrated divine, Dr. John Owen, to the effect that no preacher was ever successful who had not a certain "tartness," pungent power, in dealing with the conscience. Of those preachers who by a skilful management of the voice make pretence of emotion, and as it were *weep to order*, he said, "They mimic the Holy Ghost: what presumption!" To a minister he said, "Preach hell. Few ministers preach it, and few people believe in it; but it is a *great reality*." "Some good preachers," he said, "are much too long in their discourses. They put me in mind of a man who, after driving a nail home, keeps hammering at its head till he has broken it and spoilt his own work." He had no patience with *ignorant* lay-preachers, and often said to the young men, "Lads, sink the shaft deeper." On one occasion a man, imagining he had a gift, requested permission to address Mr. Matheson's meeting. This granted, the result was a sad display of ignorance, whereupon our evangelist, tapping him on the shoulder, stopped him, saying, "That'll do, John," quaintly and significantly adding, "Man, don't you know the Shorter Catechism is a splendid book for learners? I would advise you to study it a good while before you speak in public."

He was a good deal tried by the fickleness of friends, and he would often say of such as were not likely to stand in the day of trial, "He is nae to ride the water wi'," adding, "I expect to have no more than two or three *genuine* friends when I come to die." Once, when he was fiercely assailed for the gospel's sake, a man addressed him in terms of warmest friendship, saying, "Mr. Matheson, I will stand your friend." Matheson, casting a penetrating glance at his new patron took his measure, and replied, "Aye, aye. You will stand by me when I am right; but will you stand by me when I am wrong? When I am right I don't need my friends: I can stand on my own feet then. It's when I am down that I need my friends. Man, will you help me when I am in the mire?"

"When I preached at W——," he was wont to tell by

way of illustrating a weak point in the friendship of some, "and gave away my books gratuitously, the people were my warm friends, and used to shake my hand very cordially; but when I stood at a corner with a clothes-basket full of books which I offered at half-price, the good people did not recognise me. In fact they had suddenly become stargazers, and passed by without once seeing me."

On hearing one tell with apparent self-complacency of a Christian who had fallen, he said with a tenderness of feeling that made the reproof all the more telling, "Ah, it's him the day, an' me the morn." When shown a calumnious statement made against him in a newspaper, he said joyfully, "Man, I do like a little dirt cast upon me for the dear Master's sake. I think Gabriel would shake hands with me and say, 'I never had such an honour.'" "Suffering persecution for righteousness' sake," he would say, "is far better than a hundred dying testimonies of those who never did or suffered anything for Jesus." "Mrs. — died without giving any testimony," said one of whom he stood in doubt. "What of that?" was his reply; "you had the testimony of her Christian life for forty years. If that be not enough to convince you, then hear my dying testimony just now:

"I'm a poor sinner, and nothing at all;
But Jesus Christ is my All in all."

Do you believe that?"

He knew how to make a ploughshare of an enemy's sword. "This is no time for preaching," said one angrily to him in a market. "Look here, friend," he replied, "you believe in the Word of God?" "Yes." "Well," said Matheson, "it is written, 'Be instant in season and out of season.' You say this is out of season. Well, we are just doing as we are commanded: we are preaching out of season." "These are men of strong passions," was the sneering remark of another in reference to our evangelist and his fellow-labourers. "Thank God," said Matheson, "we are men of strong passions. He has made us of strong passions that we may be strong in his service." Nothing gave him greater pain than a blow dealt by a fellow-Christian. "An offended child of God gives the keenest blow," he used to say; "he knows a Christian's tenderest part." Yet even in

this case he had his answer ready, "Now, just lay your finger on the commandment I have broken, and I will thank you. Which of the ten is it?"

In one place, where for awhile he discharged the duties of a pastor, some who were sick complained that he had not paid them a visit. "Did you send for the doctor?" he asked. "Yes." "Why, then, did you not send for me? Is it because you care more for your body than your soul?"

Another in similar circumstances said, "You might have missed me out of church." "You are mistaken," was his reply. "I go to the house of God as a worshipper and a preacher, not as a *detective*."

When the managers of a congregation among whom he had laboured with every token of success for some time intimated to him that his services would be no longer required, as they could secure a preacher for ten shillings a week, he said, "Do you think you will get the worth of your money?" To this sarcastic question no answer was given. "Do as you have a mind," he went on to say; "but I have a little money at present, and can preach for nothing. God is blessing my labours here, and I dare not leave the place. I will take a hall, and preach there." On hearing all this, the congregation rallied around him. He was requested to remain, and his meetings were more crowded than ever.

His reproofs were often so sweetened with humour that no offence was given. Seeing several persons coming into a meeting too late, he said, "In the north a minister observing that a certain woman, though lame and scarcely able to walk, was always first at church, asked her how she managed to come so early. 'Sir,' she replied, 'the hert gangs first, and the feet follow.'" Those who come late, or for some insufficient reason never come at all, have been well named "the devil's cripples." Matheson did not spare such, and sometimes asked if any one knew how they always grow lame every seventh day.

One day a gentleman called on him, and enquired if he knew a preacher who could suitably occupy a vacant pulpit in a certain large city. After some conversation, in which the evangelist endeavoured to ascertain his visitor's ideal of a good minister, Matheson said, "By the bye, do you know Mr. —, a preacher somewhere in your neighbourhood?"

How would he do with you?" "I know him," was the reply. "We have heard him preach repeatedly, but he would not do with us at all." "Why so?" "Oh, he preaches damnation and frightens everybody. This is not the time of day for that sort of thing. He would never do, sir." At this point the evangelist brought down his fist upon the table with a tremendous blow, and as if addressing the absent preacher, exclaimed with his loudest voice, "Bravo! M——, bravo! my old friend. Thank God, you are still alive, and faithfully warning sinners of their danger." Mathe-son's visitor was astounded, and remembering he had an engagement at that moment, took up his hat and bade the evangelist good morning. In this way he stood by his friends, and this too he did at all hazards, as the following instance will show. A minister preaching in a market being assailed by a man under the influence of drink, Mr. Mathe-son interposed, and drawing himself up to his full height said, "If you strike this man of God it must be through my body." At the sight of so formidable a barrier, the drunkard quailed and slunk away.

In the course of his itineracy he once found himself in a strange, out-of-the-way region, without a friend, without lodging, and without means. It was drawing towards night, and he knew not where to go. Seeing a boy crossing a field, he called to him, and said, "Are there any godly people here about?" "Na, na," replied the lad, "there is nae sic fook in this pairish." "Are there any believers?" asked the evangelist. "Bleever!" exclaimed the boy; "I never heerd o' sic things." "Any religious people, then?" "I dinna ken ony o' that kind; I doot they dinna come this road at a'." "Well then," said the missionary, making a last attempt, "are there any who keep family worship?" "Family worship," replied the lad, with a bewildered look; "fat's that?" The boy, having taken his last stare at the curious stranger, was about to go. Matheson was at his wits' end, when a happy thought struck him. "Stop!" he cried; "are there any hypocrites hereabout?" "Ou, aye," replied the youth, brightening into intelligence; "the fook say that ——'s wife is the greatest hypocrite in a' the pairish." "Where is her house?" "Yonner by," said the lad, pointing to a house about a mile distant. Having rewarded

his guide with a penny, the last he had, he made his way to the dwelling of "the greatest hypocrite in the parish," and knocked at the door as the shades of night were falling. The door was opened by a tidy, cheerful, middle-aged matron, to whom the stranger thus addressed himself: "Will you receive a prophet in the name of a prophet, and you'll not lose your reward?" She smiled, and bade him welcome. The hospitalities of that Christian home were heaped upon him, and he spent a delightful evening in fellowship. In this way a lasting friendship began, and, what was better, a door of usefulness was opened to him.

Talking one day to his fellow-passengers in a railway train about the concerns of the soul, he was called a hypocrite. On this he took five shillings from his purse, and said to his assailant in the hearing of all the rest, "I'll give you this if you will tell me what a hypocrite is." The man was silent. "You don't know," continued the evangelist; "but I will tell you. A hypocrite is one whose deeds are not consistent with his words and professions. Now I will give you ten shillings if you will point out wherein my actions are inconsistent with my profession." There was no reply, and Matheson proceeded to improve the advantage thus gained by making solemn and pungent remarks with manifest impression on all present.

His practical good sense and ready wit were always at hand to help him. Some were objecting to receiving money for religious purposes from unconverted persons and people of the world. "I have no objections whatever," was his reply. "*God's people spoiled the Egyptians.*"

Sometimes his rebukes were very striking. To a lady, whose life was not in keeping with her light and privileges, he one day said, "It has cost you, madam, more trouble to get thus far on the way to hell than it has cost many to get to heaven." Startled, she exclaimed, "Explain yourself." "Consider," he replied, "how many barriers you have crossed; a mother's prayers, a father's godly life, the remonstrances of conscience, heart-piercing addresses and faithful warnings; and above them all, and in them all, the loving arms of the Saviour. These have stood between you and hell, but you have overleaped every barrier; you have thrust the outstretched hand of mercy aside, that you might pursue

the way to death. Tell me, are you now at ease?" The lady burst into tears, and requested him to pray.

"How is it," said another lady jestingly, "that you godly folks have more trials than other people?" "Madam," he replied, "the godly have all *their hell* upon the earth, just as you have all *your heaven* here; but when the redeemed are entering on their eternal happiness, you will be beginning your everlasting misery."

"How can you bear up amidst so many trials?" it was asked of him. "I will answer that question," said he, "in the language of an author I was reading the other day. 'A child of God may be tossed by reason of corruption and temptation on a troubled sea; but that ship shall never be wrecked, whereof Christ is the Pilot, the scriptures the compass, the promises the tacklings, hope the anchor, faith the cable, the Holy Ghost the winds, and holy affections the sails.' No fear of our bearing up and getting through!"

He constantly endeavoured to give the conversation everywhere a spiritual turn; and this he could do in an easy and natural way. A Christian lady having got a sewing machine, he said, "Now I hope that, as the Lord gives you strength, you will use it in sending missionaries to the heathen, or in helping the Lord's work in some way." Calling when very weary at a certain house, the hospitable mistress prepared for him a cup of tea, with which he was a good deal refreshed. "When I get home above," he said, "I will tell Him, 'I was an hungered, and ye fed me.'"

On visiting friends who had removed to a larger house, he said, "Ay, you have got a big house, but I have a mansion up yonder." One asked him if he had ever been wounded while at the Crimea. "No," he said; "but many a time by the enemy of souls." On hearing of a family who were interested in the Lord's work, and counted by the world revival-mad, he said, "Oh, tell them from me to bite every body they meet." Just as he was parting with certain friends at A——, the clock struck the midnight hour, on which he said with great solemnity and power, "The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that

hath mercy on thee." As they were about to leave the house of a Christian family where they had been hospitably entertained, his companion made some allusion to the reward promised those who gave a disciple a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, on which he said in the hearing of all, "Oh, they have the best bargain!" On a similar occasion, as he and his two companions were going away, he said, "You may not be aware who your guests are: you have been entertaining *three kings*." One day as he sat in a railway train he sang a hymn, on which a fellow-traveller said to him, "You seem a happy man." "Yes," he replied, "I cannot be but happy; I am safe for time, and safe for eternity." This led to further conversation, with which the gentleman was so much pleased that he invited Mr. Matheson to K——, where he resided, to preach the gospel there. His happiness was a powerful and effective sermon. By word, by look, and by deed, he was constantly testifying to the goodness of his God. "The Lord has been very, very kind to me," was his frequent saying, and his cheerfulness was often more powerful to win than words of persuasive eloquence. But he did not overlook the other aspect of the Christian's life. "How hard it is to live for *eternity*," he would say. "Living above *self* and for God," he added, "is *real* living for eternity."

It was the custom of our evangelist to hold a meeting for prayer either at noon or in the evening. This was preparatory to the evangelistic service which he invariably conducted at the close of the day. Here he refreshed his own spirit and renewed his strength: here too the Christians were provoked to love and good works. An open-air service frequently preceded the meeting within doors. The singing and praying, the loud voice and bold manner of the lay preacher, arrested the attention of the passer-by, and many who had never darkened a church door were thus induced to enter the place of meeting. Scenes of violence were not infrequent on the street, and the preacher received many a blow. At Forfar the roughs began one night to throw stones at the evangelist and his friends. "The devil is got weak now," said Matheson, "when he's throwin' gravel." Turning to his companions, he said, "Cheer on! the enemy is at his worst, and Christ will soon triumph."

So it was. The tide turned; and a remarkable work of grace followed.

"You need not go there," said one who deemed preaching Christ on the occasion of 'an execution' of no use; "the devil has such power there." "The more need then," was his reply, "for his being put down." "We won't protect you," said the police at a race-course. "A higher arm than yours will protect me," was his brave but meek reply. After a fierce assault made upon him, a Christian began to express sympathy with him; but he said, "Oh, what about *that*? They *crucified Him*."

His meetings within doors were conducted in the usual way. His addresses were characterized by great fulness and variety. He could speak to the edifying of saints. With jubilant tones and a cheery pilgrim-like air he often preached from the text, "We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." (Num. x. 29.) With swelling emotions, and in sentences full of the music of his own joy, he loved to describe the happiness of that people whose God is the Lord. "Yes," he was wont to say, "they are happy *when they look back* and remember the time when Jesus met and drew them to Himself in wondrous love. Happy *when they look forward* and see the pillar-cloud guiding them by a right way. Happy *when they look down* and reflect that they might have been weeping and wailing in the outer darkness instead of singing, 'He took me from a fearful pit, and from the miry clay.' And happy *when they look up* and think of the exceeding and eternal weight of glory that awaits them. Happy, indeed, is that people whose God is the Lord."

But his speech was mainly directed to men in their sins. Some as they advance in their ministry preach less to sinners and more to saints. The reverse was true of him. "They say Duncan Matheson is nae growin'; he is aye preachin' death and judgment," were his own words; "but," he added in self-defence, "these are arrows I have often shot, and I have found them effectual; why change them?" "The children of God," said he quaintly, "will waggle through ae way or anither; but sinners are in danger every

moment, and so I keep at them." "Lord, stamp eternity upon my eye-balls," was his frequent prayer. As the light of eternity was ever growing more clear and piercing in his soul, his heart bled with an increasing compassion for the perishing. He was careful in discriminating between the saved and the lost, between saint and sinner. He would no more have assumed that all his hearers were true Christians than that all the pebbles on the sea-shore are diamonds, or all the birds in the hedgerows nightingales.

The almost-saved had their sad history and too probable end set forth in the description of a noble ship crossing the wide ocean, surviving many a storm, and then becoming a complete and hopeless wreck at the harbour mouth. "Near the kingdom," he used to say, "is not in it. You may perish with your hand on the latch of heaven's gate."

To the careless, he often said, "There is a question which none in heaven can answer, and none in hell: can you? It is, 'How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?'"

Many a time did the formalist and hollow professor quake as he heard himself described in a discourse from the text, "I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy; and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done." (Eccl. ix. 10.)

Powerfully and affectionately did he plead with men on Christ's behalf as he spake from the touching words, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock," using homely illustrations of the truth. "A little boy, hearing his father read that passage aloud," he was wont to tell, "rushed away from the window where he was playing, and looking with wondering and eager eyes into his parent's face, said feelingly, 'But, father, did they let Him in?' Friends, you have heard the knock in some powerful sermon, some faithful warning, or when your cheeks ran down with tears and your very heart-strings were breaking as they lowered the little coffin with your dear babe into that cold grave. But did you let Him in? Perhaps you say, 'I fain would, but cannot.' A minister once knocked at the door of a poor, aged, and lone woman; but he received no answer. Louder, and louder still, he knocked. At length, as he kept his ear close to the door, he heard a feeble voice, saying, 'Who is there?'"

‘It is I, the minister,’ was the reply. ‘Ah, sir,’ said the woman, ‘I am lying very ill, and cannot rise to let you in; but if you would come in, just lift the latch and open the door for yourself.’ The good man cheerfully complied, and went in to comfort the dying sufferer with the consolations of the gospel. Now, my hearers, you say you cannot open the door yourselves. I well believe you. But there is a remedy for your helplessness: ask the Lord Jesus to open the door for Himself and come in. And He will come in. Believest thou this? Some of you who once heard the knock of Christ, hear it not now. Well do I remember being startled and kept awake by the boom of the cannon when I went to the Crimea. After a time, however, I grew accustomed to it, and could sleep amidst the roar of the artillery. So it is with many. Jesus knocks at your door in vain. His knocking does not trouble you now as once it did. In vain He pleads with you, telling you that his locks are wet with the dews of night. He is out in the cold, dark, wet night; but you care not. He is threatening to depart and leave you to perish; but you are too drowsy to listen or to care. To-night He may go away for ever. The last knock will be given. This may be the last one. What then? oh! what then?”

Regeneration by the Holy Ghost formed a large and prominent part of his teaching. He had dwelt long beneath the awful shadow of this great mystery of grace, and he often said, “I have always been afraid to preach on that text, ‘Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’” Yet he continually and most emphatically announced the necessity and explained the nature of the second birth. “Who made you a Christian?” he would ask. “Some are made Christians by their parents, some by their Sabbath-school teachers, others by their ministers and pastors, and many are made Christians by themselves. But man-made Christians cannot enter the kingdom of God. Friend, were you made a Christian by the Holy Ghost? They get their salvation from man, not from God. The sons of God are born ‘not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.’ ‘That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee,

Ye must be born again.'” This great truth of the gospel he proclaimed with no less skill than power, on the one hand avoiding the danger of making it a stumbling-block to the sincere enquirer, and on the other hand taking care that it should not jostle responsibility out of the field, and set men asleep on the damning excuse, “I cannot make myself a new creature; I must wait, and do nothing, till the Spirit comes.”

The sovereignty of God in the salvation of man, the sinner's need of the Spirit's grace, the helplessness, folly, and infatuated wickedness of the human heart, were truths written as by a pen of iron and the point of a diamond upon his innermost heart; and he always spoke as he believed. One day a friend referred in conversation to the errors of a low Arminianism that leaves no room and no need for the work of the Holy Spirit or the election of grace. Suddenly stopping, he said, “It won't do, J——; the truth is, you and I would be damned, if it were not for election. But that grips,” he added in a decided tone, at the same time clenching his fist. “Yes,” he continued, “that is true,” and suiting the action to the word, he added, “I know that if I had one foot in heaven, and Christ were saying to me, ‘Put in the other,’ I would not do it.”

Stating clearly the sinner's guilt and wickedness, the evil conscience and the depraved heart, with equal clearness and force he proclaimed the twofold remedy—the blood of Christ and the all-powerful grace of the Holy Ghost. After setting forth the utter ruin of man, it was his manner to say, “Here is the sinner, and there is ‘the blood:’ the great question is, ‘How may these two be brought together?’ The answer is, ‘The Holy Ghost: He only can do it.’”

The alpha and omega of all his addresses, whether to saints or sinners, was Jesus Christ. “A full Christ for empty sinners” was ever his cry. “This man receiveth sinners” was a favourite text, from which he feelingly discoursed of the love, pity, and tenderness of the Lord Jesus in dealing with sinners. The Saviour whom he loved to preach was He whose great heart gave way, like the heart of a little child, when on the mount of Olives He burst into tears at the sight of the doomed city. The Redeemer

whom he proclaimed was that Holy One who bore so rare a friendship for publicans and sinners. The Christ whom he held up to admiration was the same who took little babes in his arms to bless them, and received old sinners, like Zaccheus, into the same bosom, and saved them. He preached Jesus as able to save to the uttermost; whose arm of grace reacheth to the lowest depth of man's misery and the farthest bound of man's wickedness. It was Christ always; Christ more and more to the last; it was "Jesus only." His preaching was but an echo of the announcement made by the heavenly host on that memorable night when the plains of Bethlehem were a-glow with a softer, sweeter light than the light of moon or stars, and all the woodland rang with a music that ravished the shepherds' hearts, and woke the sheep from their gentle slumbers, as those nightingales of another world—the angels—sang, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men."

In short, Christ and Him crucified, Jesus risen and exalted to be a Prince, a Saviour, the Lamb of God, Substitute, Surety, Redeemer, the power of God and the wisdom of God to every one that believeth—this was all his theme. And there are tens of thousands who will recall the image of the brave, outspoken, and genial preacher, asking with equal point and feeling the question he never wearied asking, "What think ye of Christ?"

- "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.
- "It makes the wounded spirit whole,
And calms the troubled breast;
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary rest.
- "Jesus! my Shepherd, Guardian, Friend,
My Prophet, Priest, and King,
My Lord, my Life, my Way, my End,
Accept the praise I bring."

At an early period of his course as an evangelist, Mr. Matheson was led to follow the practice of meeting with enquirers at the close of every service. "He came to preach at Stirling in 1858," writes the Rev. W. Reid, editor of the *British Herald*, "when two meetings were got up for him,

and at the close those who were anxious were requested to remain to be spoken to personally in the pews—a thing unknown before in Scotland. We remember how shy our dear departed friend looked when one said to him, ‘Will you speak to those in that pew?’ He did so with some hesitation; he said nothing about it at the time, but years afterwards he referred to it, and said it was the first time he had seen or done such a thing, ‘and I thank God that it was forced upon me; and the neck of the thing was broken, and that I was no longer content to fire at long range, but to come face to face with souls.’ He found it, he said, one of the steps by which the Lord prepared him and led him on in his work, and it was no strange thing for him ever afterwards, as long as he lived, to come into personal contact with awakened souls.”

Being a true fisher of men, he not only let down the net for a draught, but drew it up again to see if any were caught. Some may be too hasty in searching for results; but even a little impatience of zeal is better than the dozing indolence of those who, under pretence of honouring divine sovereignty, make no enquiry, and cannot so much as tell whether their net has enclosed minnows or monsters. The meeting for directing enquirers was a necessity of the sudden and widespread awakening; and, notwithstanding its occasional abuse or mismanagement, has served important ends in the work of God and the salvation of souls.

Many Christians will remember with gratitude and joy the first time they were brought face to face with a soul grappling with the tremendous realities, *sin*, *eternity*, and *God*. It forms an epoch in the life of a pastor, or of any Christian. You feel you are in the presence of an immortal spirit in the very crisis of its being. You see the battle, the agony, the portentous despair of a soul wrestling with invisible powers of overwhelming might; and you tremble as you behold the fainting spirit toiling betwixt wisdom and madness to roll back the rising billows of infinite sorrow and ill. You know you are in the presence of the Divine Worker, and you seem to feel upon your own spirit the very breath of the Life-giver as He breathes on the dry bones, and evokes a fairer form than Adam’s from poorer, sadder dust than the freshly bedewed soil of Paradise.

Wise and patient dealing with enquirers is to a well-instructed believer one of the choicest means of grace.

Not many Christians, however, are qualified for this difficult work. During the period of religious awakening there was more or less patching of old garments and filling old bottles with new wine. The wound was sometimes too slightly healed, and comfort was given where blows were needed. If that old piece of legalism was abandoned, "Go home and read your Bible, and use the means of grace," which in effect is to say, "Go and work yourself into a state of grace," there was a rush to the opposite extreme in a species of bribing simpler ones into saying they believed, the great question being not answered, but hushed up. "Only just believe; just believe." Very good; but what am I to believe? What is it to believe? How am I to believe? There is often an anchor in the deep that binds the struggling soul to the shores of sin and death. Not every Christian can grapple in the depths for the mysterious hindrance that binds the awakened spirit in unbelief. Some are gifted by the Holy Ghost for this part of the work.

In dealing with enquirers Mr. Matheson always took care to discriminate between those who, as he was wont to say, "had only a scratch" and those who were deeply wounded. To the former he would speak a word fitted to deepen conviction and pass on; to the latter he never failed to preach Christ. He also found two very different classes who spoke the same language, both declaring they had no conviction. One of those classes had indeed little or no conviction of sin, and he dealt with them accordingly. The other class were penetrated with a sense of sin, but could see nothing in themselves but utter hardness of heart. These often prove to be the best cases. He never failed to bring enquirers to the Word of God and the cross of Christ. His own experience was ever of great use in giving direction and encouragement. A full, free, and present salvation in the Lord Jesus was held out to every soul. If they were sinking in deep waters, Jesus was at hand to help them. If they had no right conviction of sin, as they said, they had the greater need to come at once to Christ to receive conviction, pardon, holiness, and every

blessing freely from Him. Christ is the good Physician, and can deal effectually with broken hearts and unbroken hearts, hard hearts, proud hearts, fickle hearts, and all kinds of wicked hearts. "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh," is the gracious and true word of Him who came to call not the righteous, but sinners to repentance. "There was once," said our evangelist, "a little bird chased by a hawk, and in its extremity it took refuge in the bosom of a tender-hearted man. There it lay, its wings and feathers quivering with fear, and its little heart throbbing against the bosom of the good man, whilst the hawk kept hovering over head, as if saying, 'Deliver up that bird, that I may devour it.' Now, will that gentle, kind-hearted man take the poor little creature that puts its trust in him out of his bosom, and deliver it up to the hawk? What think ye? Would you do it? No; never. Well then, if you flee for refuge into the bosom of Jesus, who came to seek and to save the lost, do you think He will deliver you up to your deadly foe? Never! never! never!"

In dealing with enquirers, his power lay not so much in the clear, terse way in which he stated the plan of salvation, as in his homely genial manner of applying, like a kind and skilful physician, the balm to the wound. Not seldom, when others reasoning out of the scriptures failed, he would come and try his easy, off-hand method, in which there was profound knowledge of human nature and true Christian wisdom, without any show of either. A young man of talent, now a devoted follower of Jesus, found himself at the close of a meeting in deep distress. "Downcast and sad," he says, "I was stealing away from Mr. Matheson, whom I did not wish to meet. Wonderful love of Jesus! who marks our wayward steps, and still in tenderness and love calls after us, 'Come unto Me,' I was unexpectedly confronted by Mr. M., who introduced me to a minister. Hesitatingly I began, in answer to kind enquiries, to state my case, when Mr. M. laying his hand on my shoulder, said, 'Oh, I know what's wrong wi' James. I know what James is wanting. It was a' settled eighteen hundred years ago; but James is not satisfied with that: he would like something more. Isn't that it now? But that's enough,

man. Let that suffice for you.' In this way he held up the finished work of Christ, and relief followed."

Such was the manner of his life and work. It was a life full of toil, weariness, and sorrow: it was also full of truth, and wisdom, and goodness. It was strangely chequered. One day we find him associated with the noblest in the land, who do him honour as a man of original character and apostolic virtue: next day he is out of sight in some obscure village, where he is despised and shunned by all save a faithful few. Now he stands up to speak by the side of the eloquent Guthrie, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Free Church, who is not ashamed to acknowledge the evangelist and to share in his work. Many days have not elapsed when he is rejected by a little town for whose salvation he had laboured with heroic endurance: for his too pointed rebuke of sin he is driven forth amidst a tornado of odium so fierce, that not one of his Christian friends has the courage to stand up and say, "God bless him!" But whether honoured here or dishonoured there, feasted one day or starved the next, he held on his way with one noble end in view—the salvation of souls. In the midst of the world, with its huge, overbearing materialism, its gorgeous mammon-worship, its fascinating sensuousness, its carnal intoxications, its choice delights of godless pleasure, he saw nothing but *souls*, and spoke only of *eternity*. Men everywhere mad upon their idols he confronted in the name of the invisible God. To the intoxicated worshippers of Time he constantly presented the dread realities of eternity, demanding of them the sacrifice of a delicious, heart-ravishing present, and the acceptance of Christ and everlasting life, or the peril of hell's pains for a refusal. With unconquerable long-suffering he thus held on his way to the end.

CHAPTER IX.

SOME SHEAVES FROM THE HARVEST-FIELD.

“As streams of water in the south,
Our bondage, Lord, recall:
Who sow in tears, a reaping-time
Of joy enjoy they shall.

“That man who, bearing precious seed,
In going forth doth mourn;
He doubtless, bringing back his sheaves,
Rejoicing shall return.”

THEY that wisely and stedfastly set their hearts on winning souls are usually favoured with abundant success. They delight themselves in God, and in terms of the promise He gives them the desire of their hearts. For many years Duncan Matheson prayed for a wide-spread revival of true religion. The great awakening at length took place, and he was honoured above most men in reaping its fruits. “Give me children, else I die!” was the spirit of all his prayers; and, if facts be of any value, his prayers were abundantly answered.

Several of his spiritual children are already able preachers of the gospel; some are successful missionaries at home; and some have gone forth to preach among the heathen the unsearchable riches of Christ. A considerable number are useful elders and deacons; others are earnest Sabbath-school teachers and valiant street-preachers; while many more distribute tracts, visit the sick, the outcast, and the perishing. Hundreds are quietly doing that noblest and most difficult kind of Christian work—training up their children in the fear of the Lord. A multitude live to preach the most eloquent of sermons—carrying a cross for Christ; and sing the grandest psalm sung out of heaven—living a holy life. With well-authenticated instances of conversion it would not be difficult to fill a volume. Let us take a few from amongst many.

“I find the fruits of his labours in the various districts which I visit,” is the testimony of a venerable servant of the Lord Jesus Christ on his returning from a recent evangelistic

tour. "His footprints will long remain fresh and warm all over the North. I spoke to an interesting young sailor in a railway carriage some time ago. He was an Englishman and a warm-hearted Christian. He told me that, years ago, when his ship lay in the harbour of Macduff, he went 'to hear a man called Duncan Matheson in the Free Church on a week evening, and the Lord apprehended him.'"

A thoughtless young man at C—— went one night to hear him preach, and came away with an arrow in his conscience; but having promised to attend a ball, he went to the gay assembly in the hope of ridding his mind of anxious thoughts amidst the music and the dance. Not thus was his wound to be healed. In the midst of the dance the thought of eternity seized upon him, and he rushed out to seek Christ in the darkness of the night. He did not seek in vain. The light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ dawned upon his soul. He now abandoned the gaieties of the world, and after a brief career of faith and holiness fell asleep in Jesus.

Another young man, a mason by trade, was awakened, and went frequently to hear Matheson. For awhile he could find no rest to his soul. The terrors of the Lord followed him to his work; and when the thought of judgment to come arose in his mind, he would begin to hammer the stones with furious energy. His fellow-workmen were astonished; and when they asked him what ailed him, he made no reply, so entirely was he absorbed in his endeavours to stifle conviction. "The more I hammered," said he, "the worse I grew." Heavier and still heavier fell the blows of the Spirit's hammer, till at length, reduced to self-despair, he dropped into the arms of Jesus and found rest.

On one occasion when he was preaching on the links at Aberdeen, "a gay and godless young man," as he describes himself, was passing by. An arrow guided by the Spirit pierced the conscience of the youth. He was converted and studied for the ministry. Last year he was ordained as a missionary to Madagascar. As the evangelist passed away to his rest, the young missionary stood up amidst the solemn services of his ordination at Aberdeen to tell the audience that the voice of Duncan Matheson had been the trumpet of God to his ear, calling him into the fellowship of grace.

and the ministry of the Lord Jesus. The standard had just dropped from the hands of the brave standard-bearer as he fell; but bravely was it caught up by his own son in the faith to be planted on the high places of the field, where even now scenes of surpassing glory are witnessed in the triumphs of the cross. In the labours of the foreign missionary it is permitted us to hope that the voice of the home evangelist will find a powerful echo among the falling idols of that distant island, and result in gathering a multitude of the heathen to Christ. Thus not in vain did he sow beside all waters. The little winged seeds, not visible to every eye, dropping from the branches amidst the blasts of northern winter are being wafted on the breeze of providential circumstance to the prepared soil of the sunny south. "This also cometh from the Lord of hosts, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working."

At Perth, when special services were in progress, a young man from Glasgow happened to call at the house of Mrs. S., where Mr. Matheson was staying. When the evangelist was informed that Mr. — had been at the door, he said, "Perhaps he has been brought here at this time to be converted and saved. Let us pray for him." Prayer was offered as follows (I quote this from the journal of Mrs. S.): "O God, if Thou hast brought him to this house, to this town, and to this hall, to save his soul, it will be a wonderful thing. Do it, Lord, do it." The young man went to the meeting in the hall, was awakened and converted. His own testimony is this:—"I was a member of an influential Presbyterian Church, a Sabbath-school teacher, and a tract-distributor, but up to that night I was a *dead soul*. Then I was brought to see I was dead; and then by grace I passed from death unto life through faith in Jesus."

At Kirriemuir a young woman newly-awakened was urging her companion to remain to the second meeting. "Never mind," said Mr. Matheson, "let her go her own way; she is determined to perish." This word, accompanied by a look of piercing tenderness, went to the heart of the thoughtless girl. "Yes, yes," she said to herself, "I am going my own way, and that way is to death." The arrow was from the bow of the unerring marksman; and the same invisible hand that shot it drew it out, and healed the wound

with the balm of his own peace-speaking blood. After two years of a holy life that young believer calmly fell asleep in Jesus.

At Forfar, as was his wont in a strange place, he made the children his friends, and sent them to tell their fathers and mothers to come and hear a stranger preaching. "Mither," said a little boy, "there's a new man come to the toon to preach; gang and hear him." Thinking it strange to be asked by her boy, she resolved though with some reluctance to go. How to conceal from her neighbours her going to a revival meeting was her difficulty. Nicodemus went to Jesus under cover of night: this woman took her market-basket on her arm as if she was going to make the usual daily purchase, and thus screened herself from the observation and jeers of her neighbours. Day after day she appeared at the meeting with the basket. At length she was brought to the Lord. "Ye'll no need the basket any more," said the evangelist to her with a significant twinkle of his eye. The basket was laid aside: she boldly avowed the Saviour, and became signally useful in bringing others of the same class.

A woman residing in the country, impelled by curiosity, went to Forfar to hear the lay-preacher. Deeply impressed, she resolved on taking the fullest advantage of the meetings, and took lodgings in the town with the view of attending every service. The result was her conversion. She went home, walked with God, testified for Christ, and after a short time fell asleep in Jesus. She knew the day of her merciful visitation. Such is the work of grace.

One day he is standing at a street corner in Perth, and is singing—

"Nothing either great or small,
Nothing, sinner, no :
Jesus did it, did it all,
Long, long ago."

A young man passing by was arrested by the words of the hymn, which seemed to convey a new truth. He listened a moment. A light he had never seen before dawned upon his heart, and as he stood there on the pavement he became a new creature in Christ Jesus.

"Never shall I forget the first time I had the pleasure of hearing Mr. Matheson," writes a station-master on a northern

railway. "I was then a stranger to grace and to God. Much against my will I was induced to listen to God's message through him, and for the first time in all my life I was convinced that I was without God, and without hope in the world. His text, 'Escape for thy life,' was brought home to my heart with power and demonstration of the Spirit. I was in due time, thank God, brought out of darkness into his marvellous light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Oh then, extol the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together."

Take another—a young man. "I was induced by a friend to go to W—— Free Church on a Sunday afternoon. The preacher was Duncan Matheson. His text was, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock," &c. The word came with power to my soul; so much so that, although very reluctant to give way, I could not refrain from shedding tears. This being noticed by Mr. M. he came and spoke, and invited me to the vestry. I afterwards went to the open-air meeting, where my convictions were deepened. For six weeks I continued in great distress; and all the more that many who appeared not so anxious as I was were obtaining liberty from their burdens. In order to be alone I went in the darkness of night to the hill and knelt to pray, but was often disturbed by the sound of footsteps, as I fancied, but no one appeared. At this time I was looking for a mysterious revelation of the Lord Jesus, with conscious freedom from my burden and for *joy*. I had been urged to receive the Lord Jesus into my heart; and in Church I kept calling inwardly faster than tongue could express it, 'Come in, Lord Jesus! come in! come in!' thinking that if I continued long enough the Lord would come in; but all in vain. I went home and threw myself on my knees with the intention of praying till I got the blessing. I continued with strong cries and tears until, as I was afterwards told by the rest in the house, the people in the street were standing to listen. When I thought I was about to obtain deliverance, it was suggested to my mind that by earnest prayer I could get it any time; and, stopping, the Spirit was grieved for a time. I felt I was relapsing, and went again to hear Mr. M. in H—— Free Church, and at the close of the service went

with other enquirers into the vestry. Here he addressed us very solemnly, and ended by asking three times, 'Who is for Christ?' My heart responded, 'Me, me.' The moment of my deliverance was come, and the third time the question was put, I sprang to my feet, and exclaimed, 'I'm for Christ!' On second thoughts I was afraid I had committed a great sin; but the words, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved,' were opened and applied to my heart by the Holy Ghost as they had never been; and I was filled with peace. I ran to my office, but could not work, and went on praying and singing alternately. I felt an unspeakable love to my employer, and thought as he sat beside me I could do anything for him." Years have passed, and this young man has gone on and prospered, being now an elder in a Free Church, and an indefatigable worker in the vineyard of the Lord.

"I had convictions and the strivings of the Spirit," writes another young man, "from my very infancy. Fears of perishing often possessed my little heart, especially at night, and I endeavoured to obtain peace by repeating my prayers. As I grew up, I became reckless and even profane. Happening to be from home on a visit to my friends at M——, I went to hear Mr. Matheson, who was that night in the village. His text was, 'Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.' Every word he uttered fell with power upon my heart. Conviction of the truth flashed upon me. I felt as if I were the only one in the church, and that every word was directed to me. I was most miserable. I saw I had been rejecting Christ and trifling with God, all the time He had been seeking to lead me to Himself. Mr. Matheson said that people sought to enter in and were not able, because they would not take Christ as their all. I felt I was doing that. He spoke also of the Saviour standing by the side of the broad way, and stretching out his hand to stop the sinner in his hell-ward course, and the sinner pushing aside that gracious hand and hastening on to destruction. I saw I had been doing so. I never was in such an agony. It was terrible work now with me. The church was surrounded with woods, and oh, how I longed to get out and hide myself in them! I thought I should wrestle with God

until I found Christ. I felt as if I could have given life itself to be reconciled to God: I could not bear the thought of being his enemy any longer. It was life or death with me; and I felt that I must either now be saved or plunged into despair. At the close Mr. Matheson took me by the hand and looked me in the face, and I burst into tears. We knelt down and prayed. As I was crying to God, the Lord sent me deliverance. The light flashed in upon my mind. Christ must be my all, and none but Christ: Christ to trust, Christ to love, Christ to obey. It was no mere feeling, but a clear seeing of the truth. I saw that Christ received me, and that I was received by God in Him. I was enabled to cast myself entirely upon Him, and receive Him as my all; and rose from my knees saying, 'Christ for me! none but Christ for me!' Peace now possessed my heart, the peace that passeth all understanding. I felt as if I could not contain it. Mr. Matheson came forward, and proposed singing the first verses of the fortieth Psalm, 'I waited for the Lord my God,' &c. I sang this with all my heart, for I knew I had just been taken up out of the horrible pit and miry clay, and my feet were set upon the Rock. At the door a company of believers joined me, and we were not afraid to awaken the echoes with songs of praise. Next day I spoke to a relative about her soul, and induced her to attend the meeting. This issued in her conversion. Thus the Lord made me instrumental on the first day of my life in Christ in helping to bring a soul to Him. Would that every day since that had been so successful. But amid many vicissitudes of experience, and many shortcomings of heart and life, He has kept me till now, and has never permitted me altogether to lose my confidence in Jesus. I have never had a shadow of regret that I chose Christ, and, if I may judge from the past, I never will. And as I witnessed to his name at the first, so I have, though with many shortcomings, done since; and so I trust I will be enabled to do until I am called away to join in the song of the redeemed on high." This young man is a student and a missionary, whose labours have already been blessed in the conversion of sinners in three several spheres in different parts of Scotland.

The case of another young man, now an ordained mis-

sionary to the heathen. "Reports of the work of God's Spirit in America and Ireland interested several of us, and we began to meet for reading and prayer. I was specially struck with the earnest joy that the work appeared to create in the hearts of those who shared in it; and I remember wishing it should visit ourselves. Mr. Matheson visited our town, and preached on 'the broad and narrow way.' Some were impressed; but I felt only the old vague desire. Next time Mr. M. preached, he said, 'There are some of us here that can lay our heads peacefully on our pillow to-night, in the assurance that if we should next awake in eternity we should be with Christ. Friend, can you?' The question was for me, and went like an arrow to my soul. I felt that that was what I could not do; that I was not at peace with God; that to me to awake in eternity would be to awake in hell! The words remained with me. From that time I set myself earnestly to seek the one thing needful; but as to the way of finding it I was as yet quite in error. I thought there was a vast amount of performance lying to my hand before I could be accepted of God. Full pardon seemed to lie beyond great hills and wastes, which must be crossed with toilsome steps if ever I was to attain it. All day in school I used to pray, and when school was over I went home and prayed through the afternoon. I remember one day that my 'doing' received a special humiliation. A boy, younger than myself, provoked me so much that one of my old sinful expressions rushed out against him. I was sorely pierced; for then my case seemed hopeless, and all my past endeavours were nullified. Mr. M. and others had warned us solemnly against entertaining any *false ground* of comfort; and that I might be preserved from this was always a special petition in my cries for pardon. For several weeks I continued to pray and read, but no light seemed to arise. One afternoon, when Mr. M. was preaching, he came upon the expression, 'Coming to Jesus.' 'But,' said he, 'some of you are at a loss to know what coming to Jesus means. I will explain it.' My heart acknowledged its own darkest difficulty; and oh, how eagerly did I listen for the explanation! I thought that now at length I was to learn the way to be saved. But, alas! no. Seeking for something to do, I did not receive the message of the gospel, that to *look*, to *trust*,

was to live. In this state of ignorant legality I continued, though the gospel of a *present free* forgiveness had been often declared to me, till one afternoon, whose happy date is fixed for ever in my memory, I was reading James's 'Anxious Enquirer,' when I came upon these two precious words—'Come unto Me,' &c. (Matt. xi. 28), and, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,' &c. (Acts xvi. 31.) Often had I read them before, but never till now did I *realize* them. The blessed Spirit in that hour testified their truth in my heart, and I could not refrain from exclaiming, 'And is this *really* *all* I have to do? is the work really finished? and have I but to receive it and be saved?' I wondered that I could have read these words so *stupidly* before, they seemed so clear now. Falling on my knees, I thanked God over and over for such a Saviour and so free a salvation. With joyous impatience I ran along to the lodging of a young man who had been one of the first awakened in our company; and when I met him, I told him with an overflowing heart how I saw it all now, and how my heart was filled with peace. That first view of Jesus in his glorious grace can never fade from my recollection. Often since that afternoon has my assurance been clouded; but I have always found, that the only way of peace was to come again, as I did then, in the character of a helpless sinner to an Almighty Saviour. How deeply since that time I have wronged the free love of God only Himself can know; but to the praise of his grace I must declare, that there is all the former efficacy in the blood of Jesus to remove the consciousness of guilt. Nor do I look on sin now with the same regard as once. I can sincerely say, that in my most essential character a complete revolution has been effected by the faith of Jesus, and that now the attainment of likeness to the holy Son of God is my reigning desire. How sweet is the believer's assurance that the sinful heart he now bewails will soon be removed for ever. To serve Christ in love, that my soul desires above all other things. To win other hearts for Him, or to hear of others winning them, is my joy of joys. May the passion grow! To Him be all the glory. Amen."

One more instance must suffice; it is that of a young man, now a preacher of the gospel, and a successful home missionary. "I had heard of the revival work; and being

unhappy, I had serious thoughts of becoming religious and good. I went to hear Mr. Matheson. The place of meeting was crowded, and I could find a seat only near the pulpit. The stranger entered. His manner at once attracted and rivetted my attention; it was altogether so novel to me. Never till then had I seen a *man* in the pulpit,—only a minister. In his whole bearing there was such a striking absence of all stiffness and formality. His prayer touched me: no introduction, no formal conclusion; it was brief, pointed, direct. It was so solemn, yet so tender. Hearing such correspondence with the living God I was deeply solemnized. The text was Matt. vii. 13. He spoke of the work of grace in other places, of sinners convinced, of souls saved. I was moved. But when the hand was pointed towards me in the first pew, when the eye was fixed on me, when the appeal was made to me as to the state of my soul, then the arrow, swift and sharp from the hand of Jehovah, pierced my heart. I trembled. I saw it at once, suddenly, clearly—I was lost, lost, lost. Enquirers were requested to remain. I meant to do so, but a young man, who was unimpressed, pushed me out. Another, a working man, said to me, ‘Are you going in?’ ‘Ye—es,’ I replied, and we went in together. Mr. M. laid his hand tenderly on my shoulder and spoke to me kindly. His tenderness was too much for me; it touched my miserable heart. I felt that God was in righteousness against me, and that I had been in sin against God. The light that gives conviction and condemnation was shining in on me. I was standing out in painful nakedness and solitariness: I was friendless, hopeless. The first kind touch, the first kind word, burst the floodgates of my soul. Giving vent to my surcharged feelings I burst into tears. They were the first I had shed for my soul. We were addressed, and each received a copy of ‘The Herald of Mercy.’ But I found no rest. Next night he preached on Rev. iii. 20. Others were awakened: many wept: I trembled still the more. Five weeks of agonizing struggle followed. It was a long pain. At one time I resolved not to rise from my knees till I had obtained salvation, but my exhausted body failed me. Again I vowed and vowed that if God would only relieve me, I should serve Him better in the future. It was a long, bitter, agonizing

search for peace without reference to atonement in Christ Jesus, during which there was now and then pride of conviction and new-gotten religiousness. The grace of God through righteousness in Christ began now to dawn, softly and dimly at first. Mr. M. returned to preach; and the word was with power. One evening the peace of God that passeth all understanding filled my soul. I felt it was the sunrise of an eternal day. Floods of light fell on me,—light stretching up, far up to the throne of God,—light falling down from his face upon my heart. ‘God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.’ There was no fear, no shadow, no bondage. I was intensely happy. I saw the work finished, the reconciliation already made, and realized my own interest in it. Righteously *in Jesus* I entered into the presence of God; and graciously I was accepted and blessed. I believed in Jesus, believed in God, saw grace righteously and freely offered, and my heart was full of it. Heaven lay about me. Earth afforded no comparison. It was a glorious calm. Old things had passed away. I knew I had entered the kingdom; I was new-born.”

The evangelist was not always a savour of life unto life. Incidents of a solemn and affecting character occurred, two or three of which may be here narrated.

One day a woman began to pour contempt on the word of God, and shut her door in order that she might not be disturbed by the voice of the preacher. He spoke to her, and warned her; but in vain. Some time afterward she took ill, and lay dying. Remorse seized her, and in the agony of her spirit she spoke of Matheson, and cried out, “He told me that God would laugh at my calamity, and mock me when my fear came; and it is all true.” No light came. She was a terror to all who saw her die. She went into eternity in her despair.

A man of violent passions and avowed hatred to godliness opposed the evangelist with much bitterness. One day he fell a cursing of Duncan Matheson, and died with the oath on his lips.

A young woman heard him preach from the text, “These shall go away into everlasting punishment.” Somewhat impressed at the time, she afterwards resisted the Spirit, and returned to vanity. Death came unexpectedly, and knocked

at her door. She was unprepared. She remembered the despite she had done to the Spirit of grace, and as she died uttered with a melancholy voice the dreadful words, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment."

Such facts as these are as marginal notes written by the finger of Providence on the borders of revelation. We may not be able to interpret them. None but fools will despise them.

CHAPTER X.

FROM THE FURNACE TO THE SEA OF GLASS MINGLED WITH FIRE.

"Brief life is here our portion;
Brief sorrow, short-lived care;
The life that knows no ending,—
The tearless life is there.

"Oh, happy retribution !
Short toil, eternal rest;
For mortals, and for sinners,
A mansion with the blest.

"And now we fight the battle,
But then shall wear the crown
Of full and everlasting
And passionless renown.

"But He whom now we trust in
Shall then be seen and known;
And they that know and see Him
Shall have Him for their own."



OWARDS the close of 1861 Duncan Matheson found himself in floods of trouble, arising from his fearless stand for vital godliness and his faithful reproof of lukewarm religion. Exhausted by gigantic labours, he sighed for rest, yet held himself ready for new fields of toil, and longed to win fresh trophies for his great Master. He was persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. "Come," said he one day to a "companion in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ," "come, and let us visit St. Andrew's, and see the place where the old Scottish heroes fought their good fight; it will stir and cheer us, and perhaps God will give us of their martyr spirit." Accordingly they went and saw the place where

George Wishart was burned to be a light to Scotland to the end of time; where Knox thundered defiance to Rome, and proved himself a match for mail-clad hosts; and where saintly Rutherford, pattern-witness for the truth not less in his sound teaching and masterly logic than in his rapturous piety and blameless life, laboured, and prayed, and suffered, and fell asleep, saying, "Glory, glory dwelleth in Immanuel's land." After they had visited every spot of historic interest, they laid themselves down on the grave of Rutherford, and all alone with their faces on the dust they wept and prayed, praising God for all He has done for Scotland, and entreating for their dear country with many supplications and tears, another and a complete reformation in the awakening of the churches and the conversion of all the people in the land. Here too, with the tears dropping from their eyes upon the grass, they consecrated themselves anew to the service and glory of God their Saviour, begging with heart-breaking earnestness for grace to be faithful even unto death. Here too they sang praise. The words of the psalm were joyfully recalled—

"For sure the Lord will not cast off
Those that his people be,
Neither his own inheritance
Quit and forsake will He:
But judgment unto righteousness
Shall yet return again,
And all shall follow after it
That are right-hearted men."

As they sang "Rock of ages, cleft for me," they realized at once their security in the great Covenant-Head, and their oneness with redeemed men of every age: and on the spot where saints and martyrs repose so calmly they could sing, "There is rest for the weary" with unwonted joy. Thus they were strengthened for the sore toil and travail that still awaited them.

Some may feel disposed to set this down as sentimentalism. But if fellowship with God and with his saints be sentimentalism, if sympathy with Christ in his blood baptized cause, and with those that suffered for the love they bore Him be sentimentalism, if prayers and tears for a lost world that still goeth on in its mad way of cursing and casting out its best friends be sentimentalism, then I say, Heaven send

us more of it. Scotchmen are said to have hard heads; but triply hard is the heart of that Scotchman who can drink at the springs of his country's greatness and not be filled as with new wine. The ashes of the martyrs never grow cold; and dull must the Christian spirit be that is not fired with new zeal at the sight of those hallowed spots whence flamed up to heaven and far out upon the world's night Scotland's testimony to Christ, which is our country's truest glory. Happily the echoes of that testimony linger about ten thousand hearths, and come back with strange power on ten times ten thousand hearts; nor will the sweetly solemn reverberations of those martyr-voices die till they merge in the sounds of the last trump.

This incident marked an epoch in the life of our evangelist. Scottish Christianity has been characterized by the pre-eminently high and holy place assigned by it to the crown rights of the Lord Jesus as the Church's sole Head and King. Duncan Matheson was thoroughly of that spirit. His martial, loyal, heroic nature must needs love, serve, fight, and suffer for a King. Fondly and unceasingly as he preached the atonement of Jesus, and thus recognised the Priest and the one great Sacrifice for sin, the chief enthusiasm of his personal devotion to the Lord, in all the labour and turmoil of his life, seemed to take rise scarcely so much in the love he bore his Saviour as in the passionate loyalty he felt for his King. And this noble affection grew more and more intense to the end of his life: it was still to the last, "the King! the King!" When the last campaign was over, and the end drew near, one of his frequent utterances was, "I am going to see the King."

After that last and fullest consecration of himself to God at the grave of Samuel Rutherford, a remarkable change was noticed in him by his more intimate friends. His faith now took a higher flight. Henceforth he spoke everywhere and always of "going home." "O how near eternity seems," he was ever saying: "We'll soon be home." "That man breathes the very atmosphere of heaven," said some who met him. When a young man he had a presentiment that he would not live long: middle life, he said, would see his sun set. The hope of the gospel now taught him to think of the sun rising in another sphere rather than of its setting

in this. "Heaven will literally be a rest to me," was his frequent saying. In consequence of his incessant, fatiguing, and often most painful labours, his mind naturally enough contemplated heaven as a rest. All the spiritual songs of the coming glory were now peculiarly sweet to his heart. But the feeling did not evaporate in mere singing or in the indulgence of pleasant thoughts. It was in him, as all his beliefs were, a most powerful motive to work for Christ and win souls. "You are hurting yourself," we said to him. "Souls are perishing," was his invariable reply. "But you should take rest." "Nonsense! we'll rest in heaven." Some may think he carried this too far: but he had no idea of what is called "settling in life." A mighty power was working in him. How could he rest? His soul was in the agonies of travail. And till disease struck him down the years that elapsed were one unbroken day of toil for the saving of the lost.

Towards the close of his more active life, although he did not abate one jot of his manly frankness, his uncompromising faithfulness, and his fearless testimony, a mellowing influence was clearly at work in him. His prayers grew more childlike and tender; his addresses, whilst not less searching and faithful, were more deeply solemn, and more tearfully compassionate; and the big heart of the man, like an overflowing well, gushed out in streams of genuine kindness and Christian love.

Little did we imagine, when he stood up on a gloomy November night in 1866, in Hilltown Free Church, where his voice had often been accompanied with more than human power, that we were listening to his last address in Dundee. His text was "Remember Lot's wife." Lot's wife, he said—I here give not his words, but the spirit of them—Lot's wife had many privileges, but she perished. Lot's wife had a godly husband, but she perished. Lot's wife had been often prayed for, but she perished. Lot's wife had had a good example set her, but she perished. Lot's wife had been warned by God, but she perished. Lot's wife saw her danger, but she perished. Lot's wife was led by angels out of Sodom, but she perished. Lot's wife was nearly saved, but she perished. Lot's wife only looked round, and she was damned for that look. She lingered

when she should have made haste, and God left her. Mercy drew her, but she grieved Mercy, and Mercy forsook her. Where Mercy left her, Justice found her, and Destruction seized her. She loved Sodom, and would love Sodom, and God gave her her bad love to the full. The Lord took her out of Sodom, but she took Sodom out of Sodom with her. "Let me get a last look at my idol," she said; and she got a *last* look with a vengeance. "She is joined to her idols," said the jealous God: "let her alone;" and she was let terribly alone: she became a pillar of salt. Sodom was more to her than her daughters, her husband, her soul, or God. In judgment she was wedded to her evil choice: she entered eternity in fellowship with those that suffer the vengeance of eternal fire.

Ah, friends, you see how near being saved you may be, and yet never know salvation. Privileges and means of grace may be yours, and yet you may never enter heaven. You may sit at the Lord's table and sing of salvation, and after all be cast away. You may feel the strivings of the Spirit, and yet be lost. You may break off from some sins and do many things, and in the end go down to destruction. You may be all but saved, and at last find that from the very gate of heaven there is a path to hell. Anxious enquirer, you are out of Sodom, but not out of danger; you are on the plain, but not in the place of refuge. Flee to Christ. Escape for thy life. Backslider, you are just where Lot's wife was when the devouring fire overtook her. She was looking back; so are you. Remember Lot's wife. "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." (Heb. x. 38.) Procrastinator, you are trifling with your soul and with God. There is no fear of judgment, you think. How do you know? The sin of Lot's wife is your sin: take heed lest her fate be yours. You may die to-night: what then? And if you live, God may give you your own way and let you alone. Let alone, left behind by the merciful God! To be fixed in sin, to be a pillar of salt, a soul encrusted with judicial hardness, as good as damned, how terrible!

"There is a time, we know not when,
A point we know not where,
That marks the destiny of men
To glory or despair.

There is a line by us unseen,
That crosses every path;
The hidden boundary between
God's patience and his wrath."

With heart, voice, and eye overflowing with tenderness, he pled with his hearers to flee to the refuge—to Jesus. The people were deeply moved, and some of them, among the rest a man who is now a zealous office-bearer in a church, have a blessed remembrance of that night, as the time when they entered the Ark and for them God shut the door of covenant security in Christ.

In the same month, November, he went to the feeing markets in Aberdeenshire. At Ellon his sufferings were such as he never recovered from. Here, drenched with ceaseless showers, and shivering in fierce hail-blasts of no ordinary violence, he stood all day in the mud, and delivered his last testimony for Christ amidst the din and strife of the fair. "We must not lower the standard," said he, in reference to his trying work. Nor did he lower the standard, for the standard-bearer fell in the very front of the battle. On returning south he revisited Kirriemuir, Alyth, and other places, spending the last night of the year with the Christians in Forfar, whence he writes to his wife: "Forfar, January 1st, 1867. A happy New Year to you, my dearest M. The Lord bless you very abundantly. As the clock struck the knell of the departing year I was praying for you. My heart was with you all. Ah, my beloved, we may sing, sweetly sing. The Lord hath done great things for us. We may raise our Ebenezer. Now we know not what may be before us this year; but never mind, all will be well. The Lord will break up our way. He will lead us aright. He is our own God. Give each of our pets a New Year kiss from father. I may be able to come and give it myself to them to-morrow. If I am with you by 11 a.m. you will see me; and if not, it will be because of the work. I will try at any rate, but must return at night. We had a blessed time last night. We met at nine, and separated at half-past twelve o'clock. It was very, very solemn. I took the superintendence of the meeting. Very seldom have I seen such a meeting—so much power and evident blessing. A great cry for help comes from many

places. I do trust that 1867 will be a year of greater blessing than any before it."

About the middle of January he set out for Orkney; but in consequence of a severe snow-storm, it was only after making extraordinary efforts that he was enabled to reach Aberdeen. There he was arrested by the disease, diabetes, which ultimately carried him to the grave. With the sentence of death in him he returned to Perth, and thence without delay went up to Edinburgh, where he sought advice from the late eminent physician, Sir James Simpson. Little hope of recovery was held out to him; nevertheless, the ruling passion stirred in him, and he addressed a meeting, ill as he was, in the house of Mr. Barbour. On returning home he suddenly grew worse, and in his fevered condition fell into unconsciousness. But whilst reason slept, the gracious heart was all awake, and his talk was constantly of Jesus and souls and eternity. Fancying that he was addressing the students of the New College, Edinburgh, he cried out, "Young men, young men, down with books and up with Christ! Souls are perishing! souls are perishing! Up, and aim at saving sinners." Noble spirit, in thy very wanderings wise and good!

On recovering a measure of strength, he went in April to Limpley Stoke, near Bath, where he sought rest and restoration in the hydropathic establishment. A few of his letters will be read with interest:

"Limpley Stoke, near Bath, 13th April, 1867.

MY DEAR MRS. B——, I cannot tell you how gladdened I was by your kind letter. Away from home, among strangers, sick, one likes to see old friends have not forgotten them. I knew neither you nor Mr. B. would, nor many of the flock to whom I have so often spoken, and to whom if it please God, I hope to speak again—though not this Whit-Sunday —after Turriff market. Markets, I fear, if I should be spared, must be left now to others. My day, I fear, is done with them, and with much rough work besides. It has been a trying time. I cannot tell you all I have passed through for three months, nor recount to you the loving kindness of our God. Oh, how good He has been! How tenderly He has watched over me! How bounteously He has provided for me! I have been treading the banks of

the river, and listening to its flow as it rolled along, but all has been peace within. All has been calm, unruffled. I have had no fears, and at the worst was helped to say, "Even so, Father," &c. A greater trial than even leaving my beloved wife penniless on a cold world, and children loved with tenderest affection, was the thought of leaving the loved work of bringing souls to Jesus. Away from it—dumb, one sees its greatness, and heaven, hell, God, salvation, eternity, stand out as great realities. I had long battled with the storm, long tried to do something on the field, and God saw fit to put his hand on me even when success in his work was at its highest. We shall know all one day: the web is rapidly weaving, and in glory its finish will be bright, shining in perfect holiness. Hallelujah! I have been six weeks from home. How wondrous the Lord's raising up Mr. J—— M——, of London, to keep me here. He has been as a brother, and I lack nothing, as he is paying all costs. There was no hope of my getting better at home, and I can say it has been good to be here. I cannot tell you exactly how I am. My general health is better, but as yet the disease is apparently not touched. It is greatly kept under, and I am not without hope, in answer to much prayer offered and offering up, I may be so far cured as to be able to preach. It is a strange, mysterious disease, but the Lord can heal it. I am not allowed to preach, read, or write, though I cannot refrain from sending this to you. To-day I feel strong. To-morrow I may be weak. I often think of you all, and am with you in spirit. May the dew of heaven be on your beloved husband and his flock. It is a dying scene. All around this death reigns. Poor, poor England! Highly favoured Scotland! If I could preach I would. Revival all around this is unknown. My wife left three days ago for home, going to see Miss M—— on her way. Amidst all her watching, &c., she has been greatly supported. Give my love to Mr. B——, Miss F——, and all friends. Pray for me. I do hope there is room to encourage faith in my better condition for the last week. I commend you to the Lord. It is long since we met, going to Aberdeen in the 'Defiance' coach. How many are gone since! We too shall soon go. Blessed be the Lord, it is home. There is sweet rest in heaven. God bless you.

"Yours in Jesus, DUNCAN MATHESON."

TO MRS. J. S.

"Limpley Stoke, near Bath, 18th April, 1867.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—Many, many a time I think of you and of all the S——s of that Ilk. You are often very near my heart, and the prayer for blessing on each has often gone up from me here where I am living, at the back of Horeb.

"Like an old hulk disabled, I lie passive,—no easy thing for a restless Bedouin like me. I am in a new school, and if I learn my lesson well I may be able yet to comfort many and give them a lift Zionward. Rutherford says: 'Oh, how much I owe to the file and hammer of the dear Lord Jesus!' Can we not say the same?

"Tenderly, lovingly, and in a fatherly way, has the Lord dealt with me. How gently He has held the cup to my lips! How much of mercy (yea, it's all mercy) has been mingled with my lot! I have been standing by the banks of the dark river, and have listened to its flow, and yet have not been afraid. I have been on the verge of eternity, and could sing for joy. Ah, there is no god like *our* God! no rock like our Rock!

"Right glad was I to meet Mrs. C—— on my way here. I could scarcely credit it. Short as my interview was, it sent me along more cheerfully. My heart was much set on coming to see you all; but the Lord arranged differently. . . It is a strange and fickle disease, and if I should be ever again as before, it will be a special forth-putting of divine power. I long for the loved work of bringing souls to Jesus. I long to be on the battle-field. I long to sing over the slain of the Lord, and shout 'victory' because He has done it. Sometimes I hope I shall. All is in his hands. The sheep in the wilderness I feel for. The lambs' bleating goes to my heart. I pity the *lost*. It is only at times we can realize sin, salvation, heaven, hell, eternity, as great realities. How soon shall all have passed here! Life ought to be an earnest matter, *seeing we have only one*. . . And now I must close. May all blessing rest on you and yours. We are under the shadow of his wings. We are safe in his arms. We move along the rugged pathway to that land where no sigh is heard nor sorrow known, where not a cloud darkens the sky. Ah, we shall soon know about the palms, harps,

crowns of glory! *For ever with the Lord!* Once again I pray for blessings on you all.

“Ever yours in a loving Lord,
“DUNCAN MATHESON.”

“TŌ HIS WIFE.

“Limpley Stoke, May 13th.

“Another morning dawned, my beloved M——, and another week begun. How they do glide away! How quickly they run! Soon all will be done, all will end. The vast eternity lies before. Many in heaven! many in hell! No day there! no star of hope! no rest! no rest! no rest! Saved from hell, we should sing all the way. We should never murmur. Ah, how the thought should still be, ‘I shall never be in devouring fire! I shall never lie down in everlasting burnings!’ As the song of heaven shall never end, neither shall the wail of hell. May the Lord save our children! I long to see them in the ark. They will be brought. Don’t let us ever doubt it for a moment. We had a blessed day yesterday—a sweet word from Mr. T——. The Lord can restore me fully; but patience must have her perfect work.”

“Limpley Stoke, May 15th.

“How few realize the solemnity of eternity! I feel for the people. They are dying, perishing, going to destruction! Oh that God in infinite love would save! I long to be in the field again, but must possess my soul in patience. I am glad I do feel as I do. It’s joy to be able to do some little work for God. I cannot express it. My whole system feels as if it partook of joy. If not able to preach, I may for some time be able to get tracts ready, and many things. I hope Lizzie is getting on with her spelling and reading. She will try and be able to read to me the 90th Psalm when I come home. How I do long to see them (the children), and yet the Lord keeps my mind at rest. It has been all love.”

Leaving Limpley Stoke in May, he went to Jersey. He is charmed with the scenery, praises God for all he beholds of the divine glory on land and sea, and often wishes his wife were by his side to share his delight. “But we shall

see grander sights," he adds : "we shall see the King in his beauty, and the land that is afar off." But the scenery is not the great thing ; it is the souls of the perishing. In a certain town he sees the walls covered with placards announcing that Dean this and Rev. that will lecture on Shakespeare, &c., and his heart bleeds.

From Jersey he proceeds to St. Servan, in Normandy ; but the disease has fastened on him, and will not let him go. Not a breath of murmur escapes his lips. He is full of comfort, and often writes to cheer the beloved partner of his life, whose heart droops on his account. Often he breaks out in praise. "Oh praise the Lord, O my soul. How wondrous his love ! At times it quite overpowers me. Oh for grace, grace to love his holy name ! When I think of others I am humbled. Poor —— and his family several times last winter had only meal in the house. He told me so. Oh, how good the Lord is !"

TO MRS. J. S.

"St. Servan, Normandy, France, 27th May, 1867.

"MY DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIEND,—Your kind letter reached me at Limpley Stoke. . . . I congratulate you on the birth of another son. The Lord bless him, and early implant grace, that, if spared, he may be a great blessing. We can take our children to Jesus and not be rejected. They are dear to Him. I like to grasp the promise, 'To thee and to thy seed.' Our charge, our responsibility, is great ; but the great burden-bearer will take all. Oh, how He loves ! The height, depth, breadth, we cannot fathom. The length we may have some dim idea of, but cannot understand.

"I left Limpley sometime ago better of my sojourn there. I do feel stronger, but the disease still remains. It seems to have got firmly intrenched ; but the Lord can remove it, and no one else. The more I see of doctors, the more do I see they know little of it. As yet its seat is a mystery. Some days I think it is almost gone ; and next day I feel great weakness. But all is in a Father's hand, and such a Father too ! I would not it were otherwise than He chooses.

"I long to get home, and may in course of a fortnight. My dear wife and children I have not seen for long now.

They are well. She longs to meet you all. We shall see if it can be arranged her meeting me at Edinburgh, and both coming on. We shall see as the Lord directs.

"I am all alone in this strange land, unknown to any, and knowing no one. Poor, poor France! You can have no idea of the perfect despotism that reigns. No happy smile seems to light up the people's countenances. There is a restlessness and a yearning after something,—they know not what. Alas, alas! no gospel is preached, no salvation made known, and, so far as can be seen, no souls saved. I often almost weep as I see the masses here rushing on to eternity, not knowing that 'God so loved the world, that He gave his only-begotten Son.' God will not forget the prayers of many a martyred Huguenot. The soil of France was drenched with their blood. The cry, 'How long, Lord, how long,' has gone up from those beneath the altar. Many a time on entering the churches here, and seeing the mummery on every side, have I prayed, 'Lord, send thy light forth and thy truth;' and often have I blessed God Scotland had a Knox, a Cameron, a Cargill, and a Peden.

"I was looking to-day at the grave of the great Chateaubriand, who is buried on a small island off this place, and asking what now is all the glory he had? All has perished. Only shall the righteous be had in everlasting remembrance. Ah! my beloved friend, ours is a glorious hope, ours is a great reward. What things are in the light of eternity, and that alone, is worth, and ought to be looked at. To live for Christ, our motto now. To be with Him—what shall it be? I do long to go forth again. Had I been in health, I would have been speaking to masses with God's blue sky overhead and his presence realized. Open-air preaching is glorious, though hard work. I hear from Kirriemuir and Forfar that the converts go well on. Cullen still retains the blessing. I long to hear of Melrose and Little Darnick. It will come. Let faith be strengthened. What God is doing in other places, He can do with you. My kindest love to your beloved J——, to Mrs. C——, and all the S——s. Kindly omit no one. To Mr. and Mrs. B—— and A——, &c., &c. Now I must finish, as I have a good deal to do. I send you Psalm cxxi. 6 and Deut. xxxii. 9. We are marching home. Every march shall yet become an Elim. He will

take the stumbling-blocks out of the way. He will lead and guide. His everlasting arms are around and underneath. He keeps us as the apple of his eye. Hold! is it not enough?

“Ever yours in Christ Jesus,
“DUNCAN MATHESON.”

In July he returned to Scotland, and for a while stayed at Bervie, where he set up a daily prayer-meeting. From Bervie he went to Braemar, and from Braemar to Aberdeen, still seeking to recover health and win souls. Health was denied him; souls were given him. From Aberdeen he went to Dufftown, which had been much laid on his heart in prayer. The weak man was strong to bear this burden before the Lord. His prayers were marvellously answered. Here God began to work by him, and several were added to the Lord. At a social meeting held on the evening of the first day of the following year, he delivered an address of extraordinary power, and a considerable number were converted. From Dufftown he retraced his steps to Aberdeen.

His soul is on fire. “I would gladly give all I have,” he writes to his wife, “to be once more out preaching Jesus. It is a great and glorious work. I bless God I was called to it. The work done is done for eternity. All other things will soon end. . . . Tell Lizzie I long to hear of her becoming a child of God, a lamb in Christ’s fold. Tell her I long very much. Tell Duncan I wish him to cleave to Jesus. Tell Mary I long to know she has a new heart. Tell them I wish them all to be in heaven with us to praise *for ever*. I feel being away from them, but it is the Lord, and all is well.”

In the beginning of 1868 he went to reside for a few weeks with his Christian friends at Darnlee, in the south of Scotland. Here again the fire burned. He could not rest. Gathering together the people of Darnick, a village in the neighbourhood, he indulged once more in the luxury of preaching Christ. Immediately there was a sound and a stir among the dry bones. The Spirit of God began to work gloriously among the dead. The movement, though confined within the narrow limits of the village and adjacent country, was a remarkable one: men and women were brought to the Lord. Happening to meet him at this time,

I asked how he, who was suffering from a terrible malady, could do so much work. His reply was characteristic. "Ah!" said he, "the Lord saw that I was very weak, and just worked all the more Himself."

In spring he went to Carlsbad, Bohemia, for the benefit of the waters. On his way to the Continent he writes from Tunbridge Wells to Miss M—— :

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—Mary has sent me your note here. I left Perth about ten days ago, and have been in Hampshire and London. I went to see Major Gibson. He is very ill. I am here for a few days in a palace. The proprietor, Mr. R——, is a man of God. I scarcely ever was in a house like it. 'Holiness unto the Lord' is stamped upon it. I am going to Carlsbad in Austria on Tuesday (D.V.). The doctors have ordered a trial of its baths, and God has sent plenty of money to take me. It is a strange, wandering life, in quest of health. Yet all is well. I have been rather worse lately. The disease has been very active. All is in the Lord's hands. I feel leaving all at home. I shall be away about five weeks. Pray for me that I may be useful, and, if the Lord sees fit, get health for his work. I do desire greatly to see you. I long for it. Had I not been going to the Continent I would have come at once. *All, ALL, ALL* is love. God can do nothing amiss. All but Mary Jane are well at Perth. We are kindly treated. We have all things richly to enjoy. You would wonder what the Lord does for us. If I come back by London I may get to see you. Will you not be with us this summer? What a welcome you will get! I must close, as I have a good deal to do. There are many changes, but Jesus lives and Jesus reigns. We shall soon be home. It is a sweet prospect—Home!

"A dear saint of God when dying asked them to put his simple name on his tombstone, and '*kept*' under it. We may do the same.

'DUNCAN MATHESON.

Born, ——. Died, ——.

Kept.

J—— MCP——.

Born, ——. Died, ——.

Kept.'

"In Jesus, yours, "DUNCAN MATHESON."

In Carlsbad he found means of distributing some 600 copies of the Word of God. Unable to speak the language, he would turn up his favourite text, "God so loved the world," &c., and by gestures and the use of such terms as he could command he managed to introduce himself and the gospel to a good many of the people. By and by they began to know him, and hail him as a friend. Here he made the acquaintance of a German Christian, who had charge of the Bible Depôt. An attempt being made by the Burgomaster, instigated by the priest, to stop the Bible selling and distribution, and the agent being ordered to leave the house, with the view to his being thrust out of the place altogether, our evangelist took up the case, wrote to a friend in London, through whose instrumentality the priest's design was foiled, and the Bible distribution went on as before. Still panting to be useful, Mr. Matheson undertook to give instruction to the two Jewish girls who attended him in his lodgings. His own children were never forgotten. In all his labours and wanderings he found time to write little letters to them. Out of a heap let us take one very much of a piece with the rest :

TO HIS LITTLE DAUGHTER LIZZIE.

"Carlsbad, 4th May, 1868.

"MY OWN DEAR LIZZIE,—I often think of you, for I love you very much. I often pray for you, for I long to see you safe in Jesus' fold. Many a time when wandering alone in the woods here, I wonder what you are doing, and what kind of a scholar you are getting. You must get on very fast at school, as likely you will one day have to earn your bread through the education you have got. I expect great progress before I return. This is a very beautiful country. The town of Carlsbad is very pleasant, built on both sides of a little river about the size of Bogie at Huntly. The boys and girls are very much like what they are in Perth. I see some with knickerbockers like Duncan's. They have balls, and marbles, and hoops, as the children have in Scotland. But alas, dear Lizzie, they hear not about Jesus as you do. I give some of them copies of the Gospel of John, and if you saw how pleased they are! Some of them begin to know me now, and as I pass smile and take my hand. I

love all children : Jesus did so very much. I gave a man a copy of the Gospel, and, poor fellow, he was so grateful, he asked me to come at night and get wine and coffee from him.

“There are a good few Jewish boys and girls here. I feel deeply for them. They hate the very name of Jesus. Oh, my own Lizzie, if you were really converted you would pray for them. We should love the Jews. We got the Bible through the Jews, and Jesus was born a Jew. Once He was a little boy, running about the streets of Nazareth.

“Would it not be grand if God would send me back to Perth to you all healed? Would I not, as Duncan says, pack up my things, and be off to preach? The waters are very nice, boiling up from the earth. One is very great. I am up every morning long before you now. You must write me a long letter some day. I will try to send a letter to Duncan, and Mary, and George soon. Will you, dear Lizzie, take Jesus to be your Saviour? Oh, do ! It would give mother and me more joy than anything in the world would.

“Your own dear father,

“DUNCAN MATHESON.”

TO MISS G.

“Carlsbad, Bohemia, 11th May, 1868.

“MY DEAR MISS G——, How are you all, and especially your dear mother? I do hope you are all well. The larks will be singing sweetly now in S——, and I hope the time of the singing of birds (spiritual) has also come. Thank God for droppings on the parched ground. Thank God for saved ones. The little one shall soon, I trust, become a thousand, and many a sweet flower be planted among your hills that shall bloom and blossom up yonder where the weary rest. Rest is a sweet word. Even a child knows its meaning. My third child Mary is very delicate. One day she came in tired, and in her artless way said, ‘Mother, will there be chairs in heaven to sit down on?’ Oh, yes, there will be thrones, and crowns, and palms. How we shall make the courts re-echo with the sweet name of Jesus ! How we shall shout Hallelujah ! Hallelujah ! You see, I am far from home in a land of strangers, I know no one. All the time I have been here, I have been the only English-

man. I have met only one Christian, a German Protestant. It is a dark, dark land. No Sabbath here. It is the chief market day. The theatre is open, and almost every shop. The priests have it all their own way. I wish Mr. M—— and others were here one day. After that they would cease tearing the lambs, and speaking against revival. What a terrible doom theirs will be that go to hell from Scotland ! Tell W—— to flee for his very life. Were he here he would have no one to tell him. I love W——, and my heart wanders at times from this earthly paradise to the bleak strath. I long to hear glorious tidings from it. I hope M——, ‘Great-heart,’ has visited you again. God bless him, and give him mighty strength. I was very poorly when I left Scotland. I am drinking the mineral waters, and taking the baths. Thank God, I am feeling a good deal better, but as to whether it may touch the root of the disease remains to be seen. Pray for me. Tell your dear mother to ask healing for the work’s sake, if the Lord sees fit. I hope to leave this in three weeks, and may come home by Switzerland. I enclose this in a letter to Mr. Matheson, London. He will post it for you.

“I feel it sweet to lean on Jesus here. I can speak to Him though I can to no one else. He heareth prayer. My church is the woods alone on the Sabbath day. I have no one to go to. The Lord bless you all. I would like to see you once more. What if my sun is to set at noon ? Yet I long to preach Jesus. He *must* reign. He *shall* reign. We shall soon see Him as He is. We shall be like Him.

“Ever yours *in HIM*,

“DUNCAN MATHESON.”

The following letter appeared in *The Revival* :—

“MY DEAR BROTHER,—I am about to leave this lan and I am sorry to do so. Circumstances, however, compel me ; and, if my work is done in it, I would joyfully say, ‘Thy will be done.’

“Since my last, a great door has been opened for the dissemination of the Word of life. I have bought at full price from the Bible Society nearly 600 copies, and scattered them abroad. My main efforts have been directed to the peasantry, as the most hopeful and most needy field. The

poverty of many of them is such that they cannot purchase a Bible, and they need it to be brought to their very homes.

"Many a weary mile I have walked, and many a scorching sun has shone upon me. Day after day I have waited on the highway, some distance from the town, and, accosting the travellers passing along, have made all who could read John iii. 16. I felt God could make one text as effectual as a thousand; and especially that one on which so many have rested their all for eternity. It has undoubtedly been the most interesting work in which I was ever engaged. Many had never seen the Book; and many even did not know its name. This is true of hundreds of thousands, if not millions, in the Austrian empire.

"One day, shortly after my arrival, I gave a copy of John's Gospel to an old man. He took it to his home. In a few days he came to the depôt and bought a Bible. Time after time he has come for copies for his neighbours, and now he has become a self-appointed colporteur. Last week the police interfered with him, but he has since got a regular license from a magistrate, and from love to the truth pursues his calling.

"I have had a fine opening amongst the soldiers here in hospital, some of whom had been in Mexico with the unhappy Maximilian. One poor fellow, who has lost his eyesight, asked his comrades what I was doing. On telling him, he said, with a voice choked with emotion as he pointed to his sightless eyeballs, 'No light, no light.'

"One day I came upon an old man sitting by the wayside reading a copy I had given. He smiled on seeing me; and, pointing to heaven, and then to John xiv. 2, repeated with much emphasis, 'In my Father's house are many mansions,' and added, 'Yes, and one for me.'

"It is work needing the greatest caution; for there is the greatest danger of over-driving and attracting notice. One false step might injure for long to come, as, though there is a measure of liberty, yet the priestly power is very great. The work will go rolling along, but not so fast as we may anticipate, or would from our hearts desire.

"To get one Bible into Austria almost baffled me when in the east; and now the Bible Society have an unlimited

field, a field the extent of which no one can conceive. Fourteen years ago, 50,000 copies of the Word were sent across the Austrian frontier guarded by dragoons. Now they have returned, and a thousand times more will follow. A bill has lately passed the Hungarian Assembly giving free toleration; and now the colporteur may go from one end to another unmolested. Colportage is the special agency needed. Men of God must be found. The Word must be carried to the cottages of the poor, and the palaces of the rich. Men and money! men and money! The Lord send that with his blessing; for the fields are ripening, and 'the breaker-up' (Micah ii. 13) is going before. Half-hearted efforts will not do. The opening has been made, the prayer of years has been answered, and the responsibility is not realized. Something more is needed than thundering applause at great meetings, when some well-turned sentence is uttered. Something more is needed than singing—

“Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.”

“God does not want what we have not to give. The whole realm of nature belongs to Him. He has, however, given money to some, and He expects that his cause shall be supported, and that with liberal hand.

“I have gleaned much information about the Bohemian Protestant Church, and have met with some of its pastors. Looking abroad on Bohemia, you are reminded of Ezekiel's visions. The valley is full of bones, and they are very dry. Can these dry bones live? Yea, Lord, we believe they can. Only breathe, and it is done! Only command, and it shall stand fast! Many of the Protestants live too much on the past. It is well to speak of the sufferings, trials, and triumphs of those who have gone before. It is well to unroll the scroll of martyred lives, and speak with hallowed breath of the names so gloriously written there. But nothing will do in the place of a crucified, living, coming Jesus, and the forth-putting of the Spirit's power.

“Bohemia fills a noble niche in history's page; but as one reads it, how sad the thought, that what faggot and exile could not do a Christless form accomplished! Revival is a thing

unknown, and few think of the living power. If they can hold their own, they are satisfied. Efforts for the conversion of others are almost unknown. They have been sadly isolated, and now when they breathe the air of freedom, and the opening is made, no one is ready to enter on it. One said to me yesterday, 'We need evangelists. If God were to raise up a Spurgeon amongst us, the fuel is ready for the kindling.' Only let the cry be heard, 'Bohemia for Christ!' and many would rally round the standard. On its plains the battles of 1866 were fought, which have made a way for the truth never known before.

"I am deeply anxious to get 'The Blood of Jesus,' by Mr. Reid, and a selection of M'Cheyne's sermons, such as I got into Gaelic, translated into the Bohemian language, spoken by three millions. I have so far made arrangements for the translation, and also to have articles taken from the *Herald of Mercy* monthly, and inserted in periodicals published in Prague. Will your readers help with money? It would be but little for some of them to do it altogether. It would be a great privilege. I ask it in the name of Him whose they are, and whom they serve. It may be of infinite consequence having it done soon. Time is passing quickly, and masses are on the march to an eternal hell.

"A gentleman from London has been labouring quietly, and putting the gospel before many here. He has great advantages, speaking the German as well as English.

"Farewell, Bohemia! The dark shadows which so long have hung over thee may soon be chased away. A bright morning may soon dawn upon thee. Resurrection-life may be felt in thy scattered hamlets, along thy mountain-sides, and in thy crowded cities. I bid thee farewell! and as I do, I breathe out the prayer that God may soon say, 'Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee!'

"Ever yours in Jesus,

"DUNCAN MATHESON.

"Carlsbad, Bohemia, June 2, 1868."

After making arrangements with a Bohemian pastor for the translation of Bonar's "Memoir of M'Cheyne," Reid's "Blood of Jesus," and his own "Herald of Mercy," into German, he took his departure from Carlsbad. Passing

through Switzerland, he spent a few days at Mannedorf, the scene of Dorothea Trüdel's healing labours, where he was received with the greatest kindness by Pastor Zeller. "All here," he writes, "is love." Ever bent on winning souls, he sought the means of reaching at least one poor heart. A lady, who had lived a gay life, was deeply impressed by his faithful words as he spoke to her of Christ. Hastening home, he reached Perth in a state of utter exhaustion ; and it was only too evident to all his friends that the earthly tabernacle was passing rapidly to decay.

At the Perth Conference, in September, 1868, he delivered the following address on co-operation in the work of the Lord :

"We live in stirring times. The old order of things in Church and State is rapidly breaking up, or if not breaking up, great changes are taking place in both.

"A few years ago there was no need of introducing such a subject as this, for evangelists did not occupy the places they now do, and the work which the great God has on the wheels had not then appeared. Whatever may be thought, this subject is a momentous one, and demands instant attention. It is pregnant with infinite results, and affects the destiny of many a soul.

"God has raised up not a few evangelists who go hither and thither. I call the majority of them irregulars, free lances, knowing no church, understanding nothing of parochial divisions, subject to no master but Christ, and, it cannot be denied, wielding a mighty influence on not a few.

"There is much in their freedom of action fitted to help on the work, and also snares which only grace can deliver from. It is likely their numbers will be greatly increased ; and if the Lord shall use them as sharp sickles for gathering in souls, surely every Christian will, from the inmost soul, bid them God-speed.

"With such of them as have a single eye in seeking the salvation of the lost (and I think life is nobly spent if spent for this), living ministers can have no difficulty in working. Co-operation with the dead on either side is out of the question ; co-operation with the living is to be sought after by every possible means.

"Usually evangelists go to places to which they have

been invited by one or more living souls. Their work is to 'PREACH THE GOSPEL.' With all my heart I protest against what I have known—men received with all warmth of simplicity, and quietly leading unsuspecting ones away to their peculiar views, leaving afterwards a leaven of division injurious in its results. Let men be honest. They have a fair field, and the sacred rights of conscience no man has a right to invade. I have preached in many lands, and in this dear land of ours I have proclaimed salvation in its crowded cities, lowly hamlets, by the side of its wimpling burnies, and on its mountain-sides, and no one dare charge me with making one proselyte to my views, or spending my time on aught else but the one theme.

"I stand to-day and with my eye fixed on the *lost*, I plead with evangelists to keep at the one thing. With the vision cleared by heaven's lamp, they will see the crowd rushing on to destruction, sporting with death, indifferent to Calvary, laughing on the way to hell. When there are no souls to save, turn to teaching. William Burns, that man of God now in glory, was once asked by a lady many things as to how he felt when preaching to the millions of China. After a pause, and fixing his eye on her—an eye that was always full of pity—he said, 'I never think but of one thing—the *LOST* and a *CHRIST* for them!'

"I have been told that it is a sacrifice preaching always to the unsaved. I grant it. We lose much joy in always dwelling about the temple door, and not rising to proclaim higher truths, in which our souls would luxuriate. But if we speak of sacrifices, let us think of the tears wept over Jerusalem, of the sore agony in dark Gethsemane, of the dying love on the cross, and then say if life itself is not worth the giving, if we may but win one jewel for Immanuel's crown.

"Bless God for Scottish caution; but it is often at fault. When an evangelist comes to a place, there ought at first to be a 'trying of the spirits.' Standing on etiquette must be laid aside. Evangelists, if full of power, need not to be patronized. Earnest ministers are not to be ignored. They meet on a common platform. They serve the one Christ.

"Stereotyped modes of action, if need be, must be laid aside, and the ministry of the Spirit must be recognized.

"In my younger days there was a very current advice common amongst the people—'*Bear and forbear.*' There will ever be need of doing both. Essentials must be held by both as with a death-grip; but non-essentials may be scattered to the winds. In one sense, neither must act the gentleman. Both should toil and sweat as labourers. The furrows turned up by both should be so joined that when the seed springs the furrows may be hid under the golden grain ripening for the harvest-home of heaven.

"I only returned a few days ago from the sea-side. In my weakness I used to sit and mark the ebbing and flowing tide. When it was out every inequality in the shore could be seen, hidden rocks were laid bare, and the tangle-covered bottom exposed. When in, all was covered. There was nothing to be seen but the blue sea—the one great ocean. So, when the Holy Ghost shall put forth his almighty power, a subject such as this will not be raised. The waves of salvation rolling along shall put all out of sight, as ministers and evangelists,—like men rescuing the drowning from a wreck, almost sweating blood as they do it; or saving the inmates of some burning home,—run with hell pursuing and heaven beckoning onward, holding up the cross, and in thrilling tones cry aloud—

"There is life for a look at the crucified One,
There is life at this moment for thee;
Then look, sinner, look unto Him and be saved,
Unto Him that was nailed to the tree."

"There is nothing comparable to the loss of a soul. God, heaven, hell, salvation, are awfully solemn realities. The shadows of eternity are falling on the path of some of us. They are not dark, but lightened by the glory that shines from the better land. I know not how it may soon be with me. A Father can heal if He pleases. I leave it in his hand. It is sweet to know that we toil only for a little. That sowing in tears, we shall reap in joy. Let us seek the welding heat of heaven. We can only do valiantly as we receive power from on high. That power will not be withheld, and blessing will come. With all the earnestness of a dying man, and with my eye fixed on the judgment-seat, I would affectionately urge all who love the Lord to pray, labour, and live for the lost. Lift up Jesus and "**JESUS ONLY,**" for—

“His name for ever shall endure :
 Last like the sun it shall ;
 Men shall be blest in Him, and Bless'd
 All nations shall Him call.

“And blessed be his glorious name,
 To all eternity ;
 The whole earth let his glory fill :
 Amen : so let it be.”

For the rest of his time he was seldom able to preach. But the ruling passion was strong in him to the last. Although not a murmur escaped his lips, he longed for the old freedom and joy in proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation, and sometimes seemed like the imprisoned lion thrusting himself with a noble violence against the bars of his cage. One day on hearing that three persons had been converted through the instrumentality of his “Herald of Mercy” he said, “I thank God for this; but after all there is nothing like the living voice for carrying the truth to men’s souls.” Now and then he indulged in the luxury of preaching, and never at this period without marked results. There was now a marvellous intensity and tenderness in his words. He really poured out his soul in his addresses. It appeared to need more than human obduracy of heart to listen to him without being melted and drawn. In several places sinners were converted at the little meetings.

Now, however, that the living voice was all but hushed did he labour to publish salvation through the press. And the grace and kindness of his Divine Master were strikingly displayed in the remarkable blessing that now rested on his publications. Every week, and sometimes indeed every day, brought him tidings of sinners converted by means of his periodical or special issues. The blessed results of the labour of former years were also constantly and providentially coming to light, and he was both cheered and humbled. “Oh, how good a God He is !” was his frequent exclamation. “Oh ! if I were better,” he often said, “I would preach Christ more than ever. I would warn men more than ever. I would speak of eternity more than ever.”

As he was about to start for the South of England in quest of health, the dying evangelist took up the railway map to examine the route, but forgetting his immediate purpose he began to ponder the spiritual condition of the region, and

looking up said, "These three counties are *dead—utterly dead!*" Compelled by the inroads of the fatal disease to avoid the excitement of conversation, he invented various devices to supply the place of personal dealing with fellow-travellers, or other strangers whom he happened to meet. Knowing the reluctance of many to read religious tracts or books, he printed in large type on little neat cards pointed and solemn truths, with which he sought to awaken the world's heavy sleepers. For example the following:

"There is
 A GOD
 Who sees thee !
 A MOMENT
 Which flies from thee !
 AN ETERNITY
 Which awaits thee !
 A God whom you serve so ill !
 A Moment of which you so little profit !
 An Eternity you hazard so rashly !
 READER,
 Where will you spend Eternity?
 In Heaven or Hell?
 WHICH?"

His was now a new and even more Christ-like ministry. The ministry of activity, of valour, of exhausting toil, and of heroic perseverance had been fully accomplished. It was now the ministry of suffering: and holy suffering is most like the ministry of the Son of God. It is the ministry of the crushed sandal-tree which yields its perfume to the woodman's axe. The ministry of the alabaster box which must needs be broken that the aroma of the ointment may fill the house. We saw the breaking of the box, and the richness of the fragrance tempted us to ask, Why this waste,—why this premature break-up of that goodly form? We might as well ask why the angel of the covenant maimed Jacob just as he obtained victory and blessing. God's Israels have strange experiences: out of weakness they are often made strong. It was at this period he attained his greatest power in prayer. He now ascended to a summit of faith that

few Christians ever reach. "I have been all night," said he to a Christian friend, "between Gethsemane and Calvary, between the manger and the cross." Many a night was now spent on the mount of intercession. It was not merely the prayer of faith: it was also the prayer of love. As the glory of love is its disinterestedness, so one of the noblest qualities of true prayer is disinterested love. He seemed to lay his will alongside of the will of God, and the answer admitted not of doubt. Often did he rise from his knees in a flood of tears, but they were tears of joy. And we have seen a whole assembly moved till every eye was wet, whilst with child-like simplicity and holy tenderness he entreated his God—"Lord, take us to-day to Calvary, and shew us afresh thy pierced hands and feet, thy thorn-crowned brow. Give us at the cross a new baptism of thy Holy Spirit. Send us to tell the unsaved that we have seen the Lord. Make us weep over them, as Thou didst over Jerusalem. Shew us the moving mass on their march down to the pit. Shew us the city: let us walk its golden streets. We are in it by faith to-day. Shew us its jasper walls, and above all Him that is its light." Thus he prayed: and it is added by the narrator, "he wept as he rose from prayer." Often as he pled for the salvation of Scotland, and of the whole world, he said, like one of our ancient worthies, "Take long strides, Lord, take long strides."

The summer of 1869 found him in a dying state. Many prayers had been offered for his recovery, but he grew worse. All known remedies had been employed; for the same generous friends who had aided him in his numerous schemes of Christian usefulness, lovingly ministered to him of their substance during his long illness. But all means were in vain; the disease obedient to the great Master's will went on in its stern course, till at length every pin was unfastened, and the tabernacle lay in ruins. In July of that year he went to Bruar in the Highlands, where he remained till within a fortnight of his death. Although in a condition of extreme prostration, he employed much of his time in preparing various matters for the press. "The Herald of Mercy" was got ready for the rest of the year; and after he was gone it was touching enough to see his little periodical appear month after month just as he had prepared it; it

was like a voice speaking out of eternity. He also prepared a little book entitled "Things Worth Knowing," and papers called "Good Tidings" and "New Year's Gift," hundreds of thousands of which were printed and put into circulation. One of these papers, it may be stated on the authority of a faithful servant of the Lord Jesus, was instrumental in the conversion of two persons some three months after the hand of this unwearying sower of the truth had lost its cunning in death.

Another instance of blessing on those last labours appeared in "The Christian," of Sept. 15th, 1870:—

"H.M.S. *Hibernia*, Malta.—Towards the end of last year I received a large bundle of tracts, books, and 'New Year's Gifts,' from an unknown donor. They were addressed to Mr. Hodges, Royal Naval Scripture Reader (my predecessor), Soldiers' and Sailors' Institute, Burmala, Malta, who kindly sent word that I might distribute them amongst the men for whom they were intended. This I did as follows:—Hymn-books, Burmala and Valetta Institutes, books amongst the soldiers and children; 'New Year's Gifts' one in each mess of every ship on the station, some twenty-four vessels; and the tracts have been given away in various ships, regiments, hospitals, and prisons. Now all these have not only greatly strengthened my hands during the past ten months, but a rich manifest blessing has attended their widespread circulation. *The 'New Year's Gifts' and 'Good Tidings' caused quite a revival of true religion in several quarters.* One remarkable case I will mention. To the reading of a 'New Year's Gift,' one of the crew of the *Bellerophon* owes his direct conversion. This man is a genuine disciple of the Lord; so that if he was the only case of blessing, the person who kindly sent them is richly rewarded. 'That day' will declare all the good done. I ought to mention that, after W—— received the blessing himself, he sent the little messenger home to his aged mother and friends, there to be a further blessing, we trust. I should be very happy to receive another similar bundle ere this year closes, and we will look forward with increasing joy for a greater blessing on them, and to that happy hour when sower and reaper shall rejoice together in our home above. Mr. G. Brown, Sick Bay, Steward H.M.S. *Crocodile*,

Portsmouth, will receive any parcels for me, and see them safely delivered.—CHARLES BRIDER.”

On Sabbath evenings Mr. Matheson addressed a meeting in a room of the house where he lodged. To this meeting he literally crept, so weak was he; and from the last one he was all but carried to his own room. In vain did friends entreat him to spare himself. He knew his time was very short; he several times told his wife he would be removed about the middle of September; and he begged to be indulged in the luxury of preaching Christ once more. These services were deeply impressive, his last text being, “What think ye of Christ?”

As he lay looking out on the hills he said, “Very, very soon these eyes shall be gazing on the everlasting hills. . . . Soon I shall be beholding fairer scenes than these. . . . I shall soon see the King in his beauty, and the land that is very far off.”

On September 3rd he returned to Perth; and on reaching his house he called his whole family together, that together they might offer thanks for the great goodness of the Lord to him and them. He then calmly set his house in order, not overlooking the most trivial matter. “Give my clothes to the poor,” he said to his wife: it was almost the only legacy he had to leave. To his friends at parting he spake words of joy and triumph. To Dr. A. S—— he said, “Resurgam.” To Mr. M——, an evangelist, “You are going to speak of the King, but I am going to see Him.” To his old Crimean friend, Mr. Hector Macpherson, whose emotion at parting was too strong for even the soldier’s firmness, he said, “Do not weep for me: I have only to die once that I may live for ever.” To another, who found him making arrangements for a series of evangelistic services to be held at Hillhead, near Glasgow, he said, “I should like to die planning revival services.” The services then planned by him were in progress at the time of his death: the word was in demonstration of the Spirit, and a considerable number of persons were converted.

To another friend he said, “I got the victory long ago—when the Lord first forgave my sins. . . . You have nothing now to ask for me but that I may have an abundant entrance.”

To Mrs. Sandeman, Springland, he said, "It's all love—it's all well. *Reality* is the great thing—I have always sought reality. . . . I have served the Lord for two and twenty years; I have sought to win souls—it has been my *passion*—and now I have the fruit of it. One of my spiritual children went the other day as a missionary to China, and many others of them are preaching the gospel. . . . Well, at least you can say you have seen the vanquished the conqueror."

When alone, he was often heard saying to himself with a quiet jubilation of tone, "Victory!" and often too, in soft, rapt whispers, "Jesus only!"

From day to day he fed on the good word of grace. One day it was, "Ye are complete in Him." Another day it was, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Again it was, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed." Near his end he triumphed in those words, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." Shortly before his departure he was fiercely assailed by the great adversary. The conflict was sharp but short, and victory remained with the soldier of the cross. Grasping the sword of the Spirit, he was enabled to contend till at length the enemy left the field and returned no more. Curiously enough, the scripture by which he was enabled through grace at this time to overcome was the memorable passage inscribed on his grand-uncle's tombstone, "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever!" More than twenty years before he had knelt upon the grave and consecrated himself to the service of Jesus, transcribing with prayers and tears into his innermost heart the words of the prophet. They had been the helm of his subsequent career, the guiding star of his extraordinary ministry. To these words his thoughts naturally reverted; and now when clouds gathered upon the sky, his star shone calmly down upon him, and he was guided through the storm. To use his own saying, *he was now getting what he had gone in for*. There are many lights in the firmament of the Word; and it may seem meet to God in his wisdom to guide through the darkness and the tempest

some keen-eyed mariner of faith by a star too remote for your eyes or mine to discern. "I have not been wise," he said with unfeigned humility to his wife. "Yet God has used me in turning many to righteousness, and I know," he added, with an eye rekindled as the darkness passed away before the light of coming glory now streaming into his soul, "I know He is true, and I shall be with Him for ever."

To his children he spoke of Jesus, and of the chariot coming to take him to glory. He charged them each one to meet him in heaven. To his wife he frequently addressed words of comfort: "You will have your trials," he said, "but the Lord will bear you through them, and the trials will make you shine the brighter." He assured her again and again that the Lord would liberally supply all her and their children's needs. "Mary," said he to her, "I have another text to give you to-day. It is this: 'A Father of the fatherless, and a Judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation.'" (Ps. lxxviii. 5.) To his sister he said, "Oh, Jessie, isn't it infinite love that I should not be suffering?" He abounded in thanksgiving, and often asked Mrs. Mathe-son to assist him in singing praise. Psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs were the latest efforts of his voice. Two hymns, "Awaiting the Summons," and "Soon to be with Jesus," he frequently repeated; and as they seemed most fitly to express his thoughts and feelings during his last hours, one of them may, in part at least, be given here:—

AWAITING THE SUMMONS.

"Away from the wilderness-state
My spirit would thankfully flee;
And yet in the patience of hope I would wait,
Till Thou, my Lord, callest for me.

"O why should I tremble or dread
At whatever may happen around,
While I cling unto Thee, the life-giving Head,
In whom all true nourishment's found?

"Thou dost not allow me to quail,
Though keen the blasts oftentimes blow;
For Thou art my refuge, that never can fail,
Though all things are failing below.

"With a conscience at peace with my God,
And a heart from anxiety free,
I pray that the rest of my path may be trod
In happy communion with Thee."

"Mary," he said to his wife, "this room is filled with the heavenly host. Had I strength, how we would sing!" On this he repeated the last three verses of the 72nd Psalm in metre, coming back with rapt delight on the last four lines—

"And blessed be his glorious name
To all eternity!
The whole earth let his glory fill:
Amen: so let it be!"

He now appeared to be filled with the Spirit of glory and of God; and as if already triumphing amidst the heavenly host, his voice gave out with exultant tones the words of Psalm lxviii. 17—

"God's chariots twenty thousand are,
Thousands of angels strong;
In 's holy place God is, as in
Mount Sinai them among."

As night came on—the last brief period of darkness to him for ever—he said, with characteristic joyfulness of faith, "Light all the lights; and let not this be a charnel-house." It was to him not death but life; not sorrow, disaster, or defeat, but joy, honour, and victory. It was not a time to mourn, but a festive season; and he would go to the marriage-supper of the Lamb with a garland of praise in his hand to cast at the feet of the King. It was in the same jubilation of faith that he often said, "Be not sorrowful at my burial. Praise God as ye carry me to my grave. And when you lay me down, sing—

""There is rest for the weary.""

Yet amidst all this triumph, nothing could be more striking than the increasing trustfulness with which he clung to the cross. The scriptures he chiefly dwelt on were those bearing on the death of Jesus in the room of sinners. To an evangelist who came to bid him farewell, he said, with death-like earnestness, "Preach CHRIST." Not long before he had said to a young minister—one of his own converts—"If I were to live I would preach *substitution* more than I have ever done."

His peace was now neither coming nor going, but flowing on like a river; and he frequently repeated these lines—

"In peace let me resign my breath,
And thy salvation see;
My sins deserve eternal death,
But Jesus died for me."

He had now but one want—"the coming of the King." "How is it the King tarries," he said, in a tone of intense longing, "when the chariot-wheels are so very near?" Then he seemed to hearken for a little to the inaudible voice of the King, and after the pause said, "Ah, but He has a purpose in this!"

It was said to him,

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are."

"Yes," he replied; "and He is doing it for me." His suffering was great, but at the worst he said, in his own hopeful way, "Beyond the sighing and the weeping
I shall be soon."

At this time, a few hours before he died, he said that many of his old friends were passing before his mind. His ardently affectionate heart was summoning them up for a last embrace. Mentioning the names of one after another, he said, "Give them my undying love."

Every prayer seemed to be answered and every wish gratified. He longed to see his sister, and she came unexpectedly from Huntly. He desired to see his former pastor and fellow-labourer in the gospel, Mr. Williamson, and providentially his well-tried friend came in after a long journey. He earnestly desired once more to see the writer of these pages, and it was my privilege to be with him during the last hour of his life. On entering his room I was struck with his appearance. He was singularly elevated, and yet profoundly calm. His intellect possessed all the vigour of his best days; his eye was clear and softly lustrous; his voice had recovered its manliness and power, and his lion-like features seemed to repose in the sense of victory. I saw at a glance that he was on the threshold of glory, for the very light of heaven was on his face. Yet all was so natural and unaffected that I could not help saying to myself, "He is the same man, the very same man, Duncan Matheson and no other." Even a touch of the old humour was there. Taking a few whiffs of a cigar to relieve his mouth of the painful sensations caused by disease, he said, referring to the morbid pietism which his manly spirit had never liked, "If some people saw me at this, they would think it was not very like reading 'Thomas à Kempis.'"

Particularly and tenderly he enquired about the welfare of all his friends. As of old, he asked especially about the work of the Lord, praising God when he was told of prosperity, and saying solemnly in reference to certain who temporised, "Never mind them. 'What is the chaff to the wheat?' saith the Lord." Then he began to tell me that he was resting on the Sin-bearer, at the same time quoting the scriptures that were yielding his soul peace and rest. He said, "I am weary, and I am waiting. . . . Heaven will literally be a rest to me." He seemed like a man returning from the harvest-field with the last golden sheaf upon his shoulder. Pacing wearily along the stubble in the clear, crisp air of an autumnal evening, suddenly the countenance of the worn-out reaper brightens, and his step is instinctively quickened as his ear catches the first sound of the merry-making and the harvest-home; and all his weariness is forgotten as he anticipates

"The shout of them that triumph,
The song of them that feast."

As he talked of Christ and glory, he said, "It may be a few days yet before I get home, or only a few hours." Perceiving the emotion I could not conceal, he said, with the tear of fond, but manly affection in his eye, "You cannot come with me. You have more work to do, and you must wait awhile. . . . Ah! dear Macpherson," he added, with much feeling, as he called to mind the former days, "you and I are like two war-ships"—the old warrior spirit stirred in him to the last—"meeting far out at sea, and one of them is going down in mid-ocean." "Not so," I replied; "rather it is this: one of them is about to enter the haven of peace, while the other is left to toss upon the uncertain deep." Then, as if girding up his loins, he said bravely, "I have cast my five fatherless children upon the Lord, and all shall be well."

His heart now began to stir again with longings to depart, and with the high praises of his God. When we had prayed together, he said in his old familiar way, "Man, I don't get singing enough. I want to sing: will you help me?" I agreed to sing with him the hymn, "Shall we gather at the river?" But before singing he insisted, with that warmth of genuine hospitality that characterized him, on my partaking of refreshment. Just then he was seized with cramp. We seemed

to hear a voice saying, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee." Quickly his wife and sister were by his side. "Our friend is in deep waters," said his kind Christian physician whom I ran to fetch. So indeed it was: but his feet were firm upon the rock. The everlasting arms were underneath him. "Lord Jesus, come quickly! Oh, come quickly!" he several times exclaimed. Quickly the Lord Jesus came and took him. Our hymn was not sung. He went to sing by the river: we were left to weep. On the 16th day of September, just as the sun was going down, Duncan Matheson disappeared from our view to shine in another sphere. Thus departed a right brave and great-hearted man,—the man who above millions had lived for God, the man who above most men had laboured for souls and for eternity. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours: and their works do follow them."

In accordance with his own wish the funeral was a private one. On the 21st September a few friends, not without prayers and praises, and tears and sore pangs of grief, quietly carried him to the new burial place at Scone, and laid him down in a pleasant spot chosen by himself. His friend, the minister of the Free Church at Scone, having offered prayer by the grave, the company joined in singing, "There is rest for the weary," two of the evangelist's own converts, a preacher and a student, both devoted to the work of the Lord, leading the praise. So we left him there to rest, and truly he sleeps well.

His grave is marked by a plain monument on which is inscribed, as prepared by himself, the following epitaph:

"In Memory
of
DUNCAN MATHESON,
Editor 'Herald of Mercy,'
and
Evangelist.
Born at Huntly, Nov. 22nd, 1824.
Born again, Oct. 26th, 1846.
Died Sept. 16th, 1869.

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament: and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever (Dan. xii. 3.)"

CHAPTER XI.

CHARACTERISTICS.

"Need holy deeds and holier hopes offend,
On lower heights, the distant gazing crowd,
Who, following on, deny their forward friend,
Refusing still to speak his praise aloud,
Though now he sleeps in peace, unheeding sun or cloud."



IN person tall, erect and broad-chested, with head firmly set upon the shoulders, and incapable of drooping, Duncan Matheson was the picture of manliness, self-reliance, and valour. The leading features of his countenance indicated, if we may believe physiognomy, the keenest discernment of human character,—a faculty he possessed in the highest degree. His eye, clear and penetrating, softened with his rising emotions until the glistening tear revealed the genuine tenderness of his heart. His nostrils, wide and prominent, visibly dilated with the enthusiasm of the moment,—like the nostrils of the war-horse at the blast of the trumpet or the din of battle. Although rigidly temperate in his habits, he was exuberantly happy, jovial, and free; his countenance beamed with good cheer, while from a storehouse of mother-wit and quaintest humour, his ready tongue was continually bringing forth the rarest oddities and drollest fancies. His powerful voice, clear, sonorous, and trumpet-like, seemed created on purpose to rise above the noise of the elements, the din of camps, and the hubbub of the market-place; and yet it possessed a compass, a pathos, and a cadence, which he could modulate with the precision of a bar of music. His intellect was shrewd, masculine, and practical. His heart was a well of sympathy and kindest feeling. His will was prompt, resolute, and daring. In a word, his soul was a stronghold of restless forces of enthusiasm, vehemence, and heroic ardours, which in their lofty consecration were often impatient of the ordinary limits of convention.

His Christian character fitted closely to his natural man. The religion of some men suggests the idea of ill-fitting garments, as if they had put on somebody else's clothes. Not so our honest evangelist. His religious character, even in its eccentricities, was a natural and consistent whole: it was simply the man himself, inspired, possessed, and swayed by one great and holy passion. His armour fitted him well; so well, indeed, that he slept in it; and helmet or sword he never laid aside till from his encounter with the last enemy he was carried home victorious on his own shield.

His character was so sharply defined at all points as to render him curiously unique. In himself he combined the strongest good sense and the rarest eccentricity; a purpose of life most spiritual wrought out with abounding flesh and blood; most disinterested love strangely yoked to overwhelming self-assertion; deepest-toned gravity and the broadest humour; the most laborious earnestness and the most jubilant light-heartedness; the loftiest ends and the lowliest means. Now he is preaching a sermon full of apostolic majesty and grace, and anon you find him ringing a hand-bell, like a common crier, through the streets of a country village, and inviting the inhabitants to a revival meeting. At one hour he is issuing his "Herald of Mercy" with all the dignity of a royal proclamation, and next hour he is seen competing with a twopenny show in a fair for the ears of the rabble.

There he stands, a man of the people, yet towering above them; the enemy of all that is unrighteous and unreal; the friend of all that is genuine and true; the unequivocal witness of Jesus Christ; the soul's advocate at the world's bar, the stern cross-examiner of hypocrites; a man standing at the parting of the ways, and, without respect of persons, saying to every passer-by, "This road leads to heaven, and that to hell." He was in truth the herald of the Invisible running on before, and shouting lustily, "The King is coming! the Judge is at the door! Prepare to meet thy God!"

Duncan Matheson was a fine specimen of the character that is mainly composed of seemingly antagonistic or inharmonious qualities. He was both the lion and the lamb. Such was his courage and such his kindness, such his

strength and such his tenderness, such the comings and goings of the genial and the severe, such and so sudden the changes from battle to peace and from play to work, and such the rare measures and minglings of the man and the child in him, that he might be likened to one of his own native mountains, bold, rugged, and stern, yet with a soft gleam of sunshine, covering birch and boulder, corry and cliff, with ceaseless alternations of fairy-like light and shade.

There was in him a fine blending of the natural and the spiritual elements of the thoroughly Christian character. In some good men the natural life is too much dissociated from the spiritual life. Between these two there is a thorn hedge, and religion in such a case seems to lie in the painful efforts to pass from the one field to the other. The things of this life are on one line of rails, and the things of the other world on another line. When they are busy with *Present-world* Train, the other *World-to-come* Train is standing still ; and again, when the latter is set in motion, it can go neither fast nor far, lest the luggage should be left behind. In Duncan Matheson the two trains were one, and moved upon the same line of rails, though with this one distinction—life was life and baggage baggage. In fact, in him the natural man and the spiritual man were in as close alliance as the right foot and the left. Some good people go into the necessary affairs and innocent joys of life, as if they were a bar to spiritual progress, and an unavoidable snare ; but the more healthy soul knows they are a test of true spirituality, means of grace, and steps to heaven. In the subject of this memoir there was no trace of mawkishness or sickly pietism. His laughter was as free and innocent as his tears.

Straightforwardness and sterling honesty were among his leading characteristics. Everything cowardly and crooked his soul hated. He was the enemy of every sham. In this he was a representative man ; for it may be said with truth that he represented *downrightness in character* and *reality in religion*. Truly did he say on his deathbed, "Reality is the great thing : I have always sought reality." Himself sound in the faith, he hated *dead* orthodoxy with a perfect hatred. The "living dog" of an earnest though faulty revivalism

was in his opinion better than the "dead lion" of a heartless orthodoxy. Truth no doubt is truth; but the letter killeth: it is the Spirit that giveth life. Water is water; but better surely is a cupful from the living well than a pitcherful from the stagnant pond. Dead orthodoxy is but the maker of decent graveclothes for dead souls. At best the teacher of lifeless doctrine is but the master tailor of pharisaism. Some men worship the truth of God instead of the God of truth. Dead orthodoxy is the worship of truth, and is the most subtle of all kinds of idolatry. "All truth is precious," they say. Yea; and so is life; but there is a difference between the life of a man and the life of a dog. All money is valuable; but who does not see the difference between a penny and a pound? Our evangelist was grieved to see men splitting hairs while souls were perishing. Are the disciples nodding and sleeping while the cause of Christ is bleeding at every pore? Are men piously wagging their heads because the Lord's work is nailed to a cross? Alas! it is even so.

In his love of reality he was blind to the mere accidentals of life, such as names, titles, riches, purple and fine linen. In this respect he was colour blind: he saw the man, and only the man, never the toggery of the man. Many men see everything in the world except the souls of men: he saw souls, and nothing but souls. He could see grace shining through poverty, wrinkles, and dotage. A poor old Christian woman, who would have been contemptible in a poorhouse, was to him "a daughter of the King," a princess of the true blood royal, and an object of supreme interest and regard.

The zeal of some is like a fire on a chimney-top—more conspicuous than useful. Of such he was wont to say, "Some have got into the revival into whom the revival has not got." But for all sorts of religion he had his practical tests. When preaching in a certain rural parish on the day of thanksgiving for the harvest he said, "It is all very well for you to come to church and *say* thanks; but I will tell you what is the thanksgiving most pleasing to God, and without which this day's service is but a solemn farce. Let the farmer who has had a good harvest go and give a boll of meal to the poor widow in his neighbourhood: that is

the thanksgiving God loves." At the close of a meeting, perceiving certain persons well-dowered with earthly substance singing with enthusiasm Watts's beautiful lines,

" Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my heart, my life, my all,"

he went up to them, and said, "I see you enjoy the singing of that hymn very much;" to which they replied in the affirmative. "Well," said he, "you know the Lord will receive from us much less than the whole realm of nature, and as I am engaged in several schemes for his glory, I am sure you will be delighted to help me for his sake." They were fairly caught; but whether or not their purses sang the same tune is another question.

Everything unmanly even in appearance he disliked. Shortly before his death, writing to a "dear son in the faith," he says: "I hope you are preaching on. Be a man in it. Many chirp like chickens, crow like babies, and put on the Dundee whine like ——. Be a man, D——. God means you to be what He made you. Be sure there is nothing holy in any acquired tone of voice. Roar out salvation. Get your soul steeped with the great realities of eternity. Come in contact continually with God, heaven, hell, sin, salvation, and so shall God own you. Your dying father in the faith, D. M."

When lay-missionary to the late Duchess of Gordon, he discovered that certain persons who enjoyed the lady's favour, and had her ear, were employing their influence to prejudice her mind against the work of God, and that she was being carried away by their fair speeches. Going straight into her presence, he bluntly told her the truth. "Madam," said he, "I see you are being carried away by misrepresentation and flattery. I must tell your Grace the plain truth. I see you are offended. I cannot help it. Were I to keep back the truth, or use flattering words like —, I should be a traitor to God and my own soul, and to your Grace also. You are angry at me; well, be it so; but remember, your Grace, that we are both going to the judgment-seat of Christ, and you and I will stand on the same platform there. That is all I have to say." Well done, and bravely done,

honest man! Your forty pounds a year—no fat living certainly, but yet your earthly all—is in peril; but let it go; what are forty pounds a year to manly self-respect, honesty, and a good conscience? The Duchess, eminently a wise and gracious woman, came in due course to see that honest Duncan was right; and she thought none the less of him that he had virtually sacrificed her favour and his own worldly interests for the cause and truth of Christ.

Martial, chivalrous, and heroic, his spirit and character were essentially of the soldier type. All the elements of the soldier were strongly developed in him: his virtues were those of the warrior, and even the grace of God in him wore a soldier-like air. Opposition roused him; difficulties and hardships only nerved him for greater effort; whilst failure or defeat seemed but to develop the resources in which he was so fertile. His Christian work was a warfare, and his whole life in the faith a campaign. He loved to speak of Christ as his King. Valiant, mailed, and ready for battle, his very thoughts were marshalled, and his words went forth like an armed host. His thoughts and images were often borrowed from war. When his companions appeared to shrink from the fierce ordeal of preaching in the market, he was wont to say, "Come, let us charge them." In his letters he says: "Keep up the flag. Never ground arms. Always advance." Once, when the means failed of the expected result, he said, "Never mind, I am a sinner saved; and when I enter glory, what a regiment will meet me! and we will shout, 'Victory! victory!'" In his preaching he loved to speak of "raising the standard," "unfurling the banner," "marching right forward," "no quarter to the adversary," and "never sheathing the sword till the soldier's blade is exchanged for the victor's palm." His sentences often fell like the blows of a warrior; and never did ancient Caledonian wield broadsword with greater force than did this clansman of Christ wield "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." His manly, chivalrous, lion-like bearing often carried the day when more timid souls would have made a truce. No words could more exactly describe the man and his life than those of the dying apostle: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." And this phase of his character—his valour, his endurance,

his indomitable power of battle, is to my mind pictured in perfection in the well-known verses—

“With force of arms we nothing can;
Full sore were we down-ridden;
But for us fights the proper Man,
Whom God Himself hath bidden.
Ask ye, Who is this same?
Christ Jesus is his name,
The Lord of Sabaoth’s Son:
He, and no other one,
Shall conquer in the battle.

“And were this world all devils o’er,
And watching to devour us,
We lay it not to heart so sore—
Not they can overpower us.
And let the Prince of Ill
Look grim as e’er he will,
He harms us not a whit;
For why? His doom is writ—
A word shall quickly slay him.

“God’s Word for all their craft and force
One moment will not linger,
But, spite of hell, shall have its course—
’Tis written by his finger;
And though they take our life,
Goods, honour, children, wife,
Yet is their promise small;
These things shall vanish all,
The city of God remaineth.”

His enthusiastic temperament was well ballasted by practical good sense; his impulses were kept well in hand by a great capacity for business; and the stern spirit of the warrior was tempered by generosity, affectionateness, and genuine kindness of heart. His affection for his mother we have seen. “Hundreds of times,” he says in a letter to his sister, “have her last words, last actions, last look, come to my mind with a thought of the triumph over death which she achieved; and I have often, often called to mind the command she gave us—it was short, but oh, what a meaning it contains! It was ‘Look to Jesus.’ A command big with our welfare for time and eternity.” To such an one it is unnecessary to say that wife and children were unspeakably dear. His friends enjoyed his most ardent affection; and

he was more than chivalrous, he was *Christian* in his treatment of a foe. Doing good, showing kindness, relieving want, and lessening the sum of human misery, was to him a feast, and although "Eternity" was stamped on his eyeballs, he would go out of his way to lend a little material help to the poorest thing on earth. One poor believer he maintained until the day of her death, and many others he ministered unto of his substance. Often did he give away his last shilling. On principle he gave part of all he ever received. "I never give but I get more" was his testimony. "It is so like God," he would add; "He will never be in our debt; no, not even in appearance." Once when ill he spent a sleepless night. As he lay tossing, he remembered that a certain evangelist was not employed, and must be in poverty. Next morning found him, ill as he was, on the top of the coach, and on his way to the village where the man's family resided. He could not rest till he saw how matters stood. It was as he feared. He found the wife and children of the evangelist at the point of starvation. Slipping a pound-note into the grateful mother's hand—the last pound I believe he had in the world—he returned home to rest.

One day meeting a student who looked sad, he enquired if the young man was in trouble, and found that the furniture of his widowed mother was about to be distrained for rent. Pulling out his purse, he said, "Here, take all I have; and if it is not enough, let me know. Get the matter settled at once." His generosity to godly students scarcely knew bounds, and when his own means failed he quietly obtained for them liberal donations from others. As he believed not only in the common ministry of Christians, but also in the special ministry of an ordained pastorate as a divine institution, he spared no pains or expense in aiding godly youths while prosecuting their preparatory studies. In the work of selecting and raising up fit men for the pastoral and missionary offices few have been so successful. At one period no less than fourteen or fifteen of his young men were prosecuting a course of study at the University and Divinity Hall. Whilst all of these enjoyed his affectionate care, most of them also experienced his generosity in the most substantial form.

He possessed an inexhaustible fund of cheerfulness and

good humour. No man ever created more happiness in this way. To despondency or dulness he never succumbed. His sorrows he kept secret: you never saw but the sunny side. To this store of gladness nature and grace contributed equal shares: and freely having received he freely gave. In the exuberance of his mirth his friends sometimes thought he would go too far; and once when gently chided, he gravely said, "Ah, but you see I never joke with the world: it is only with God's children that I make merry." That was true enough. With the people of the world he was grave and serious without gloom. He could not sport with men on the brink of a precipice: with men under sentence of death he could not make merry. The protracted and extreme suffering of his last illness did not diminish his cheerfulness as it did not impair his faith. Shortly before he died, I happened to meet him. He was struggling to support his emaciated frame by means of crutches. The sad change was more than I could bear: but as I drew near the brave man shouted with a voice as jubilant as ever, "Hulloa! Mac, you remember the boys' rhyme, 'Cripple Dick, upon a stick.'" At the very worst he could say, "All is well." The joy of the Lord was his strength.

He was a man of great faith. In respect of temporal things his trust in God was simple and strong. Although for many years he had no stipend or salary, no stated or certain income of any kind, and was sometimes without a penny in the world, he seemed to be above all care. Indeed, such was his generosity when his purse was full, and such his cheerfulness when it was empty, that many fancied he was possessed of great wealth. On the income-tax paper once sent him, he wrote, "All my income: 'My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus,'—fulfilled to the very letter." When asked if his life was insured, he said, "Yes; my life is insured in the office of the Sun: 'The Lord God is a sun and shield; He will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.'" When dying, he said, with a firm and confident voice, "I cast my five fatherless children on the Lord." His faith was never put to shame whilst he lived; and it has borne abundant fruit since he passed away. He had learnt in the experience of years to

cast all his care upon that Father in heaven who numbers the very hairs upon his children's heads.

In the matter of his salvation his faith was equally pronounced and firm. In the early part of his Christian life his faith was much and variously tried by sore temptation. On one occasion, when sitting at supper with his friends, a strong temptation to disbelief, even in the being of a God, seized his mind. The devil seemed to whisper in his heart, "There is no God! there is no God!" He left the table and went out into the garden. It was a bright, starry night, He looked up to the sky, and, gazing upon the spangled heavens, exclaimed, "There is a God! there is a God! He made all these, and He is my God." The tempter fled, and he returned into the house with a settled peace in his soul; and from that time he was freed from doubt, and could always say, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."

In the work of winning souls his faith was almost unbounded, and often rose to the sublime. He was not of those who seem to think that the eternal love and purpose of God in Christ will result in little or nothing, that the bloodshedding and death of God incarnate has so scanty fruit that we scarce dare hope to see a sinner saved, and that the gift and work of the Holy Ghost, and the preaching of the gospel, is the most unfortunate and hopeless business in the world. On the contrary, firmly believing in the purpose and love of God, and knowing that the divine sovereignty runs upon the path of appointed means, he preached the gospel with the most confident expectation of success. Because Jesus has finished the work of redemption, he knew his labour should not be in vain in the Lord. Realising the freeness and sufficiency of grace, and the power of the Holy Ghost in his own soul, he took the Lord's command and warrant in his hand, "Preach the gospel to every creature," and proclaimed the glad tidings with the most joyful assurance of success. He believed, and it was done to him according to his faith. Hence he plied all sorts of means, means that many accounted foolishness, and with amazing results. Hence, too, he preached "out of season," and carried the gospel into the

very seat of Satan ; and the efforts which some reckoned hopeless, unwarranted, and insane, were crowned with the blessing of God in the salvation of many souls. Thus through faith he was "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." The right side of the ship where the great draught of fishes is to be got, is simple, unquestioning, child-like faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Was this then the great secret of his success in winning souls? I think not. Was it intellectual gifts? No. Many possess larger endowments of mind who are less successful. Was it his ready utterance or force of speech? No. Many are more eloquent, with fewer and meaner results. Was it the holy consistency of his life? No. Many saintlier men are less useful. All these things, especially his prayerfulness and faith, doubtless contributed to his success in the Lord's work ; but the great secret, I firmly believe, lay in his *intense, self-denying love of souls*. God always blesses love. "Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three ; but the greatest of these is charity." Faith is blessed, and hope is blessed ; but love enjoys Benjamin's portion of the Master's favour. Listen to the words of Richard Baxter : "I confess to my shame that I remember no one sin that my conscience doth so much accuse and judge me for, as doing so little for the salvation of men's souls, and dealing no more earnestly or fervently with them for their conversion. I confess that when I am alone, and think of the case of poor ignorant, worldly, earthly, unconverted sinners, that live not to God, and set not their hearts on the life to come, my conscience telleth me that I should go to as many of them as I can, and tell them plainly what will become of them if they do not turn, and beseech them with all the earnestness that I can to come to Christ, and change their course, and make no delay. And though I have many excuses, from other business, and from disability and want of time, yet none of them all do satisfy my own conscience, when I consider what heaven and hell are, which will one of them be the end of every man's life. My conscience telleth me that I should follow them night and day, and take no denial till they return to God." These words exactly express the spirit, aim, and scope of Duncan Matheson's life and work. To him the **conversion** of sinners was everything ; if souls

were not saved all else was nothing. On a country pastor modestly declining to occupy Rowland Hill's pulpit in London, the latter said, "Some preachers address my people's intellects, but some of them have no intellect, and the fine preaching is lost on them. Some preach to the imagination, but many have no imagination. Some preach to the feelings, but many say they have no feelings. Come you and preach to their souls. They all have souls, and all will be edified." Our evangelist preached to souls, and grudged no pains or sacrifice for their salvation. When offered an important situation by a gentleman who appreciated his fine business capacity, he though at the time penniless declined, and afterwards said, "What! did he think I would give up preaching Christ for £200 a year?"

In every letter we find him constantly recurring to his **one** great care, the saving of souls. In his correspondence with Christian friends he labours to stir them up, if it be **only** to distribute tracts. Speaking of his "Herald," he says: "Year after year these messengers of mercy have been scattered through the wide world, amongst all classes, and *fruit in the conversion of souls has been the result.* Last year upwards of 400,000 were circulated, and the demand made by earnest labourers in the Lord's vineyard far exceeded the supply. In the city of London, Glasgow, and other great cities, the thousands issued were but as a drop to the mighty ocean. The agency employed was very varied, *all aiming at the one thing—all seeking the salvation of precious souls.*

"I am very anxious to send forth more than I have ever done. Doors are open on every hand, and the need is very great. We are bound to preach the gospel to every creature. With the living voice we cannot, but much may be done by the printed page. I thank you very warmly for your kind interest in years gone by. Will you kindly help again? It will be a service done to the Lord. I shall freely take the labour of preparing and sending forth, if you assist by either giving or obtaining contributions, however small."

To make his appeal the more stirring and effectual he adds the following lines:—

“SOULS are perishing before thee—

Save, save one!

It may be thy crown of glory—

Save, save one!

From the waves that would devour,

From the raging lion's power,

From destruction's fiery shower—

Save, save one!

“Who the worth of souls can measure?

Save, save one!

Who can count the priceless treasure?

Save, save one!

Like the stars shall shine for ever,

Those who faithfully endeavour

Dying sinners to deliver—

Save, SAVE ONE!”

With characteristic faith he adds, “WHY NOT MANY?”

Whenever and wherever he saw any prospect of winning souls, he hesitated not to make every personal sacrifice in order to forward the good work. Once, in a certain town where he was strongly opposed and left without any resources, his companion suggested that, as they were no longer able from want of means to pay the rent of the hall where the meetings were held, they ought to leave the place and seek another field. “No,” said Matheson, in a resolute tone of voice, “I will not give in yet. I will tell you what I have made up my mind to do.” Taking out his watch—a gold one—he went on to say, “This watch is very dear to me, for it was presented to me by the Bible Society for my services in the East; but precious though it is, on that account I have resolved to pawn or sell it. The proceeds will pay the rent of the hall and keep us going for another week or two, and after that we shall see what is to be done.” That very day, however, money was sent him from an unexpected quarter, and the watch was spared. Several times afterwards, as he told me himself, the watch was devoted in the same way; but as often as he sacrificed it in his heart did relief suddenly arise in the providence of God. The mainspring of that invincible resolution was doubtless *a happy assurance that God was with him*. This sustained him in his labours of love, and seemed scarcely ever to be shaken. At one of the most trying periods of his public

career, when reproached beyond measure, cast out and forsaken, I wrote him in terms of sympathy, putting into verse what I believed would be his rallying cry. In reply he said: "Your lines have struck the true key-note to my heart. The thought that God is with me has charmed my melancholy away. I feel nerved for anything."

Here are the verses:—

"TO MY FRIEND DUNCAN MATHESON IN TIME OF TROUBLE

"CHRISTIAN CONSOLATION.

- "When thy steps on earth are miry,
When a snare thy soul would bind,
Faith on wing shall seek her eyrie:
God is with thee,—never mind!
- "Though they sevenfold heat the furnace,
Though in lion's den confined,
Good to thee thy God will turn this:
God is with thee,—never mind!
- "Though a sea of trouble front thee,
With Egyptian host behind,
What on earth or hell shall daunt thee?
God is with thee,—never mind!
- "When dark clouds and mist descending
Dull thy soul and make thee blind,
Heavenward still thy steps be wending:
God is with thee,—never mind!
- "If thy friends should all forsake thee,
And thy dearest prove unkind,
Let that only bolder make thee;
God is with thee,—never mind!
- "Should thy frame give way in weakness
(So the saints have often pined),
God thy strength is health in sickness;
God is with thee,—never mind!
- "Trust not man, but Him that made thee,
Man is fickle as the wind;
Fear no evil, God thy dread be,—
God is with thee,—never mind!
- "Let all creatures fierce oppose thee,
Men and devils fast combined,
Till ten thousand round shall close thee;
God is with thee,—never mind!

"God of power, and truth, and mercy,
Thee my God in Christ I find;
And I hope in death to dare say
'God is with me,—never mind.'"

In his love to souls he constantly tore himself away from the endearments of home, the pleasures of society, and the comforts of life. For souls he cheerfully sacrificed the favour of the lukewarm, and incurred the hostility of the world. To win souls he suffered hunger and thirst, heat and cold, weariness and pain, the loss of friends and of reputation; was willing to be counted a fool, and even a crafty impostor; endured hatred, and scorn, and calumny; was mobbed, and beaten, and disgraced, and cast out; and finally fell a sacrifice to his Christ-like compassion for perishing men. How few in love for souls will sacrifice ease, money, dress, dainties, society, and reputation! Not many Christians will in the greatness of their love sell themselves to labour and sorrow for a lifetime. To love souls with a wise and effectual love—a soul-winning love—involves the vivid realising of things invisible and eternal, constant fellowship of the Spirit, deep and true sympathy with Christ, strong faith in God, and an utter deadness to the ten thousand vanities of the world, with a greater sacrifice of self than most Christians are found to make. Rare are the men who can follow Jesus into a Gethsemane of agonizing prayer and bleeding love, and drink a deadly-bitter cup on behalf of souls. Most good men make large reserves of themselves for their own behoof. Few will not allow a fair margin of undevoted flesh and blood. Duncan Matheson kept no balance at that old and over-cautious banker's, Spare-thyself. He reserved not an inch of soul or body, but put his all into the service, and used it with a will, taking out of himself all he could get, even to the uttermost farthing, and so selling his life as dearly as possible. His strong faith looked steadily into eternity, and as he looked the fire burned in his heart till the very heat of his zeal consumed him, and he died of this heroic disease—hard work for others' good.

"Hasten to the side of the dying evangelist ere it be too late," wrote one who knew him well, "for the King's chariot is at the door of his modest home. Wife and

children have been calmly cast long ere now on the great Provider. The cause of the Lord Jesus Christ, dearer than they, is not so easily cast over. The arm of the dying soldier will scarcely disentangle itself from the gospel shield. The devil has shot his last arrow at him in vain ; and the last cloud that rested on his brow has rolled away before that promise : ' They that be wise shall shine as the sun, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.' Whisper your question here. The eye opens once more ; triumph kindles it. ' I am going to see the King. If death has terrors, I've met none of them. At least you can say you have seen the vanquished a conqueror. Oh that I could have served him here the fifty years out ! Saving souls has been a passion with me these two-and-twenty years.' The chariot has left his door, carrying him to victory. Where the angels veil their faces ; where the elders cast their crowns ; where the song of the seraphim is hushed at the higher notes of the redeemed ; where the Mediator pleads for his scattered people on earth in the hearing of the great congregation safely gathered ; where the river of life yields its waters unmeasured to lips that thirst no more ; where there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over sinners on earth repenting ; where the beatific vision is all unhindered—*there* seek the freed spirit of the evangelist." *

The following estimate of his character is from the pen of my friend Mr. Campbell, minister of North Free Church, Aberdeen. " Mr. Matheson was quite an uncommon character, strongly pronounced in his individuality, and freely asserting himself wherever he went. There was in him *a child-like sympathy* that was very attractive, and made him eminently true and reliable as a fellow-worker. All policy and finesse he abhorred ; himself had nothing to conceal, and he concealed nothing ; in fact, his openness and outspokenness he carried to a degree that was decidedly eccentric ; but even his hardest words were never uttered in a malicious spirit. Our brother was one who wore his heart outside, and spoke as he thought,—spoke almost all he thought, as if his very whispers, in spite of himself, became

* " Who is this King of Glory ? " By Mrs. Barbour, author of " The Way Home," &c.

audible; and this of course was not always safe or convenient. Connected I suppose with this child-like simplicity was his happy, buoyant nature, his mirthfulness and hilarity. He was the very embodiment of happiness, diffusing an atmosphere of happiness all around him. . . . Mr. Matheson was a man of a very kind and loving disposition. This was a feature of his character—very prominent. His hand was continually open, both to friends and strangers. It seemed to do him good to be freely giving away money and gifts. He was indeed a most unselfish being, and wanted only to live in the happiness and love of others.

“But it was as a child of God and servant of Jesus that Mr. Matheson was chiefly to be noted and followed. He was a man of faith who lived habitually under the power of things unseen. He apprehended and had ever before his mind as realities God and sin and salvation, heaven and hell: these were to him great and influential realities. I once heard him remark—and I believe he spoke the truth—that never for many minutes together was the thought of the conversion of souls out of his view. He saw very plainly in the Word of God and in the world around him that men in a natural condition are ready to perish and that for ever; and he knew, on the best of evidences, that the truth as it is in Jesus embraced by the soul brings a divine peace and holiness. Hence he laboured with all his might to win souls to Christ, and not without results, such as convinced him that the Lord was with him. His loving disposition, being sanctified, sought nothing less for souls than their eternal well-being, and his natural simplicity, under the control of the Divine Spirit, engaged him in the most direct and decided efforts for the realisation of his object. He was a man of *prayer*, in the spirit of which all his views and movements were baptised.

“You have enquired about Mr. Matheson’s work and its results in this part of the country, but I have no means in my power of speaking with particularity on that point. For some months he had pastoral charge of the Congregational Church in Blackfriars Street in this city. This, however, was a kind of sphere not exactly suited to him; he needed a wide field in which to range; while the proclamation of the gospel of salvation was more to his liking and abilities

than the regular routine of pastoral teaching. He evidently felt most at home in open-air meetings, standing on a chair or table, and casting forth that powerful, melodious voice of his in earnest invitations and solemn appeals to the hundreds or thousands massed before him. I have no doubt the great day will declare that multitudes of precious spirits were delivered from eternal death and translated into the kingdom of light and blessedness by the instrumentality of our true-hearted and noble friend."

The transparency of his character revealed its flaws. He was outspoken to a fault; and a certain brusque forwardness of manner sometimes gave offence. He was not so well fitted to wear the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, as to bear the grim array of sword and shield and coat of mail. His was a Samson's strength and a Samson-like warfare; and occasionally his measures were not unlike that ancient hero's firebrands tied to foxes' tails, which not only burnt the Philistines' corn, but also displeased his timid friends. The young stonecutter sent by his master into the quarry was typical of his work as an evangelist. His part was not to polish corner-stones or carve delicate forms with a tool as fine as a lady's needle, but to go down to the quarry and do sledge-hammer work, and by executing fireblasts to rive out of the rock solid masses to be polished and built by other hands. But if his boisterous manners and eccentric bluntness offended gentler natures, these very angularities seemed to others as natural as the crooks in a crab-tree, or the twists of a whorled shell. We need not gloss over faults; but it is vain to pray nature to send us trees without crooks, or shells without those curious and apparently useless whorls. The various forces of grace as well as nature have each its place and work. Shall the gentle dew chide the rude thunder? or the thunder say to the dew, Weakling, what art thou? Wisdom is justified of all her children.

Duncan Matheson was pre-eminently a *revival* preacher. In the revival of religion he rejoiced. To extend the work and blessings of revival he laboured with all his might. This was his mission; and no man was ever better fitted for his peculiar calling than he was for stirring drowsy saints, and awakening a slumbering world. Some may be disposed to ask, What is revival? Since the devil has his

counterfeits of everything gracious and divine, it may be well to answer the question.

Listen to the Psalmist. "Wilt Thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?" (Psalm lxxxv. 6.) Fresh life from God issuing in new joy in the Lord—*that is revival*. Hear the voice of the church in the Song of love: "My Beloved spake and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." (Song ii. 10-12.) Spring-time of the church, summer of the new creation, buddings of grace, songs of holy joy, and the glad voice of the welcome Saviour calling his beloved into closer fellowship and sweeter foretastes of the better paradise—*that is revival*. Harken to the prophet: "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert." (Isa. xxxv. 5, 6.) The plagues of man's heart and the woes of man's life marvellously healed by grace and truth—*that is revival*.

Let us come to the New Testament. Listen to the words of Jesus: "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." (Matt. xi. 12.) Earnest and vehement desire, bold and strenuous effort, self-sacrificing and soldier-like decision, resolute and victorious perseverance in seeking the Lord and securing salvation, like warriors mounting the breach and capturing the citadel—*that is true revival*. "Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you: for John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the publicans and the harlots believed him; and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterwards, that ye might believe him." (Matt. xxi. 31, 32.) Sinners of the worst class fleeing from the wrath to come, and finding in Christ mercy to pardon and grace to help in the time of need, while self-righteous professors and rationalistic moralists look on with anger and contempt, and perish at the very gate of salvation—*that is the usual course of heaven-*

sent revival. The prodigal son, returning home with penitential tears, his father running forth to meet him and clasping him in his arms, the kiss of forgiveness, the servants summoned to minister to him, the best robe, the ring, the shoes, the fatted calf, the feast, the music, and the dance, and the churlish elder brother coming to add his phial of vinegar to the entertainment—the whole story presents a perfect picture of a true revival scene.

Listen to the evangelist: "As Jesus passed forth from thence, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the receipt of custom: and He saith unto him, Follow Me; and he arose and followed Him." (Matt. ix. 9.) Jesus speaks to a man of the world in the midst of business; by a word He casts the charm of an all-conquering love around Him, and the worldling straightway becomes a heavenly-minded pilgrim—that is revival. "The woman saith unto Him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when He is come, He will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am He. . . . The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith unto the men, Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Christ? Then they went out of the city and came unto Him." (John iv. 25-30.) Jesus meets a sinful woman at a well, accidentally as men say, but really in virtue of a pre-arrangement as ancient as the counsels of eternity, then and there convinces her of sin, reveals to her his glory as Redeemer, and by a mysterious touch of saving grace sends her away to awaken the whole city by her simple testimony—that is genuine revival. "And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zaccheus, Make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received Him joyfully." (Luke xix. 1-18.) Christ converts a notorious sinner among the branches of a sycamore tree, and the converted sinner immediately opens his heart, his house, and his purse to the Lord, to the disciples, and the poor: and in the name of righteousness offers restitution fourfold for any wrong done his neighbour—that is genuine revival. "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we

do? Then they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added to them about three thousand souls." (Acts ii. 37-41.) A pardoned sinner preaching the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and multitudes are converted on the spot—*that is revival*. "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." (1 Thess. i. 5.) Not mere knowledge in the head, but experience in the heart; not a gospel in the creed merely, but in the character; not a profession only, but a possession also; not a mere glimmer of hope struggling through clouds of doubt and fear, but a present salvation, a great felt reality of joy in the Holy Ghost and much assurance—*that is characteristic of all genuine revival*.

Revival is the springing up of the life of God in the soul of man. It means sleepers awaking, wanderers returning, saints becoming more holy, and sinners becoming saints. It means peace to the troubled conscience, songs instead of sobs, and thrills of holy joy instead of stings of remorse. Were the revival of religion, pure and undefiled, to fill the world, it would break the neck of sin, stay the ravages of war, empty prisons, turn labour into a joy, dry up rivers of tears, reduce the misery of mankind to a shadow, and transform earth into a paradise. It is "glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, good-will toward men."

Of such a revival Duncan Matheson was the unwearied advocate and successful promoter. He preached not revivalism, but Christ the life. He preached the doctrines that contain the germs of all true revival—the doctrines of the cross. These doctrines he proclaimed in the way in which they are usually most effective; he preached as one who believed what he preached, with a holy enthusiasm of faith and love. He preached in prayerful dependence on the Holy Spirit, and his preaching therefore was "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." In that sense he was a wise and true *revival* preacher.

Our evangelist was a pioneer in the work of revival. Like all pioneers he had to clear the forest, make roads across dreary swamps, grub up thorns and briars to get at the virgin soil, and endure hardships as a good soldier of the advance guard. Not seldom did he encounter a hostility

that might have provoked a more patient spirit than his. Sacred prejudices hoary with age met him at the frontier, and challenged his right of entrance. Calumny often lied her worst, and the lay-preacher was held a fool, a fanatic, and a rogue by turns. That he disturbed Israel cannot be denied; but Israel settled upon his lees needs to be disturbed. To go into a place where thousands lay asleep and, as his manner was, suddenly to blow a blast that might almost wake the dead, was abominably "out of season." To all, therefore, except the few who arose and trimmed their lamps, his presence and testimony gave deadly offence. The opposition thus encountered was met with wisdom and firmness. When told that a certain parson threatened to keep him out of his parish, the evangelist said, "Go and ask him if he has got a monopoly of saving souls." Once when preaching in a northern market from the text "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him," a scoffer came up and sneeringly cried out, "Ay, but when is He coming?" The evangelist in prompt reply raised the Bible in his hand, and looking round on the audience, solemnly said, "Ah, friends, you see this is a wonderful book. Eighteen hundred years ago it predicted that 'there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming?' I call you to witness that the prediction is just now fulfilled. What do you think, sirs? Is not the Bible true? 'He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.'" The caviller was silenced.

Infidels frequently assail Christianity on the ground of the inconsistent lives of some of its professors. Matheson when opposed did not hesitate to use that weapon of their own against themselves. A certain noisy sceptic, who had scandalously failed to pay the rent of a hall where he had been lecturing, was one day throwing out his challenges and charges against Christians, when our Evangelist stepped up and said, "Ask him if he has paid the rent of the hall yet at ——?" The effect on the lecturer may be imagined. The balloon soaring so proudly, suddenly collapsed and fell into the mire.

Knowing that scepticism is often but the desperate effort of a heart ill at ease to find rest, his usual method of deal-

ing with infidels and gainsayers was not so much through the head as through the heart. His frequent question to the caviller, accompanied with a knowing glance of the eye, "Are you happy—tell me now, are you happy?" was found unanswerable. For the most part, however, he avoided controversy, and met opposition with kindness, prayer, and the word of God.

Some opposed the revival movement and the work of the evangelist from dread of excitement and ecclesiastical disorder. They forgot the far greater hubbub of Pentecost, when thousands were crying, "What must we do?" It would have been strange if Peter and John had only answered, "Propriety! propriety! God save propriety!" What parent would not prefer the noisy and even excessive demonstrations of his children to the decent stillness of a desolate home and the chamber of death? There is an order of life and an order of death. There is an order of lifeless form which breeds the saddest disorder; and there are disorders of a new-born life that to the discerning eye carry in their bosom the germs of the truest order. By wise and gentle management the irregularities of ignorance and indiscreet zeal may for the most part be entirely done away with or reduced to insignificance. All things in the house of God ought indeed to be done decently and in order; but some of the worst disorders and errors are due to an unwise and cruel repression of new-born life. Making due allowance for the eccentricity of his manner, and the impetuosity of his character, Duncan Matheson was a true friend of order in the Lord's house. He had no greater joy than in co-operating with godly pastors and other office-bearers in building up Zion's walls, and many of his spiritual children are pillars of the church at this day.

He was opposed by others because they feared *lay*-preaching would give rise to heresy. If church history does not lie, not laymen, but learned ecclesiastics have generally been the originators of heresy: witness, for example, apostate Rome. If a minister of the gospel dreads the influence of Christian laymen, he underrates his office, he mistrusts his Master, he misunderstands the time; the testimony of the lay-preacher is often the echo of the faithful pastor's voice. Who would not wish to hear the

wilderness resound with the thousand cheerful echoes of a revival time? When a religious awakening, with its excitements, marvels, and it may be also subversion of old methods and ideas, takes place in a congregation or parish, let the faithful pastor put himself at the head of the movement, and he will speedily find men and things falling into rank. Every man by and by finds his own post and work, and everything its own place and value. In point of soundness in the faith, our lay-preacher could have given lessons in theology to not a few, alas! who, though ordained teachers in the churches, are amidst the present darkness giving no better light than the light of the wandering star.

Other opponents of the lay-preacher and revival work sceptically asked the question, "Will it stand?" They pointed to the evil mingling with the good, forgetting that there will always be thistles among the corn, and tares among the wheat. "Look at these backsliders," said they. Well, what is the fact? Is any of the churches perfectly pure? Why, in the churches where the quietest modes and most *judicious* means are employed without any revival demonstration, a portion of the communicants invariably become worldly-minded, ungodly, and even immoral or profane. The Apostolic Church itself was not free from impurity. Even under the ministry of our Lord, many disciples went back, and walked no more with Him. Are we wiser than the Lord Jesus or his apostles? Backsliding is an evil greatly to be deplored: yet it may be a sign of good. It may indicate the existence of a standard beneath which men may sink. In certain religious communities, in which revival is tabooed, backsliding is simply impossible: a soldier of straw never deserts: a man up to his neck in mud can never fall. Thousands that were converted during the revival period are now walking with God, and are in every sphere of human activity adorning their profession by holy and useful lives.

In summing up the results of so useful a life we can scarcely avoid asking the question, Why did it seem good to the divine Worker to use a layman in so marked a way in the conversion of sinners? Without presuming to pene-

trate the mysteries of the sovereignty of God, a few thoughts may be here suggested by way of an answer.

I. Perhaps in this way the Lord Jesus is calling the attention of his church to her lay-talent, which has too long lain neglected. Now that she begins to be alive to her duty on this head, our gifted laymen may be found occupying a not less useful, though perhaps a less prominent, place in the work of the Lord than they did in the recent revival.

II. In this way the Lord seems to be rousing his church to the prosecution of her evangelistic mission in the world. She has erred and failed in ceasing to acknowledge and employ the order of evangelists, as well as pastors and teachers. If she will not send forth evangelists in a regular, constitutional way, her divine Head will send them forth in a way fitted to humble her and to stir her up to jealousy. The peculiar function of the pastor is to conserve, to edify, to defend. The work of the evangelist is aggression and extension. A policy of mere self-preservation must prove selfish and fatal. To live and prosper the church of Christ must be aggressive.

III. Is it not made to appear by the remarkable gifts and fruitful labours of the lay-preacher that not man, but the Lord,—not the church, but her divine Head,—can raise up true and efficient preachers of the gospel? Does not the life of such an one illustrate and vindicate the gracious sovereignty of the Holy Spirit, who distributes his gifts as seems good to Himself? The church of God has no more important question to settle than this, *the training of her ministers*, unless it be the question, *how to get the right men to be trained*. The best method of tempering the sword is an important matter: not less so is the procuring of the genuine metal to be tempered.

IV. Is not the extraordinary usefulness of the layman fitted to humble those ministers who are apt to pride themselves on their learning and office; and to stir up such of them as are prone to care more about polishing sermons than winning souls, who pillow their heads upon the heads of their own discourses, and go to sleep upon neatness, fine taste, and theological precision?

V. Is it not also made plain that salvation is of the

Lord? It is "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." When Goliath fell, not by the sword of a trained warrior of Israel's host, but by a smooth stone from the sling of the Bethlehem shepherd lad, the victory was manifestly of God. So things that are not are chosen of God to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence. (1 Cor. i. 25-31.)

VI. To encourage the right-hearted servants of Jesus Christ, is it not made as clear as noonday that faith, and zeal, and love, will always be honoured with blessing and success?

In the life and labours of this man we see the power and beauty of the grace of God. Grace it was that followed him from a child, and called him a youth into the fellowship of the saints. Grace finding him a man by nature made him a man of God, a faithful witness of the truth, a valiant soldier of the cross, a lover of good men and souls, an unbeneficed Dean of the Chapel Royal of Feeing-Markets, unmitred Archbishop of Open-air, and above all, the faithful Apostle of Christian reality and thoroughness. Grace it was that burned and shone in him—a golden candlestick of the true temple—and inspiring him with a very fury of holy ardour to save lost men, made him—unlearned, unlicensed, and unordained though he was—a more successful winner of souls than a whole Presbytery of mere sermon-makers, or a diocese of prayer-readers. Grace it was that taught him to preach Christ with the water in his eyes to ten thousand, and not less earnestly to a single soul; to make no difference betwixt great and small, to see only in each an eternal destiny trembling in the balance, and to drop tears as freely for the daughter of poverty and vice as for the fine lady in her silks and in her sins. Truly it was the power of God that wrought mightily in him, in labours at home and abroad; on land and sea; by night and by day; in strength and in sickness; in hunger and in thirst; in honour and dishonour; in peaceful gatherings and amidst tumultuous scenes; in cottage homes and on fields of blood; amidst the hubbub of a Scotch fair and the babel of the oriental bazaar; amongst roughs and lawless men; among soldiers and sailors; amongst infidels, and Turks, and Jews, and Papists; on the decks of ships; in camps and noisy

tents; in the bivouac and the trench; in abodes of misery and death; in hospitals among the diseased, the plague-stricken, and the dying; amidst perils of every kind; in affliction and sorrow; in scorn and rejection of men; in reproach, and calumny, and sufferings too truly apostolic: for he was even a fool for Christ's sake and as the offscouring of all things. Surely, it was the power of Christ that made him a matter-of-fact Christian, bearing as he did bear no mere modern sham cross, no mere painted and decorated chip of comfortable and self-sparing profession, but a huge beam of reality with flesh-piercing nails of painful sacrifice, crushing him, as it crushed his Master, into an early grave.

Beyond question it was Christ in him that enabled him to rejoice with irrepressible joy amidst his many trials and tribulations, and in his very weakness to triumph over the gates of hell, being faithful to his latest breath. In fine, as it was grace that inspired the holy self-consecration and the solemn vow as, in the solitude of the burial-place and the silence of night, he knelt upon his uncle's grave, where the struggling moonbeams revealed the prophet's words upon the tombstone, and a still more silvery light, such as never was on land or sea, photographed the divine saying upon the shrine of his innermost heart to be the motto and the motive of a lifetime; so it was grace, most rich and free, that answered his prayer to the full, and strengthened him to sustain the high resolve with martyr-like endurance throughout the long and noble service of two-and-twenty years, till the spirit of the soul-winner wore out all that was mortal of the man, and he went to realise the full meaning of the prophet's words, where "they that be wise shine as the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." "Whatsoever things," therefore, in this man's life "are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things;" and to the God of all grace be all the glory.

Now, Christian reader, is there no lesson for you here?

If you have been stirred, or cheered, or strengthened, give God the praise, and use every fresh ray of light to finish your day's work on earth, and prosecute your soul's journey in its perilous chariot of flesh to its awful close. Yield to your Saviour an undivided heart; love Him with a holy tenderness and a child-like simplicity; serve Him with a wise enthusiasm and a meek abandonment of self-will; lay out your all for his glory, and die daily for his sake; be as thorough in your wisdom as the world is in its madness; and go your way to heaven as manfully as most men go their way to hell. Remember, basking in the light is not shining. Few Christians shine. Clouds of earthliness and tempestuous darkness of the flesh obscure their brightness, and their light is too dim to guide a wanderer in the world's night, or rule another's destiny for eternal good. Be you a shining one. Dwell under the face of God. Even the dust sparkles and is resplendent in the sun. If the stars make night beautiful, it is because they revolve in day: they shine in the night because they are not of it. Too many conceal their lights beneath the "bushel" of carnal policy and the fear of man. "Let your light so shine that men, beholding your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven." Righteous in the righteous One, hold fast that unity, even as Christ's body cleaves to his Godhead, and knows no divorce. Ever receive Jesus in his constant love. Be true to the pure impulses of his Spirit. Live in the clear rays of his truth, and give full credit to his dark sayings till the day dawn. Frequent the well-springs of his grace, draw freely from his fulness, and see that you give no offence by an unbelieving stint of prayer. Meekly bear the sharp chills of adversity till the rough manners of his providence shall melt into the summer dews of heaven, when the mask of present mystery shall vanish in the glory of his face, and He shall lay aside once for all the guises of his love, and you shall misinterpret his heart's intent no more for ever.

Reader, if you are not in Christ, ponder, I pray you, "the path of your feet." As we part, I will leave the Scottish evangelist at his old post, with his hand pointing you to the way of life. You remember the words of the Lord Jesus in which He describes the wide and strait gates (Matt. vii.

13, 14), and by a few master-strokes portrays the characters, ways, and eternal destinies of the two classes of men, the saved and the lost. This was our evangelist's great burden, and never did he preach on the broad and narrow ways, as we heard him tell, without seeing fruit. The substance of that discourse, so marvellously owned of God, he printed in a conspicuous form, which he held up everywhere to catch the eye of travellers to the judgment-seat. Here then, as we mark the last footprint of this faithful servant of the Lord, let us erect his finger-post of

THE TWO ROADS.

THE BROAD.

Its gate is wide . . . Matt. vii. 13.
 Its way is dark . . . Prov. ii. 13.
 Its paths are false . . . Prov. xiv. 12.
 It is crowded by those
 who forsake God. Isaiah i. 4.
 who do iniquity . . . Isaiah lix. 3.

 who serve the devil. John viii. 44.

 It leads to Misery . . . Rom. ii. 9.
 Death . . . Rom. vi. 21.
 Judgment. Matt. xii. 36.
 Its end is HELL,
 where there shall
 be wailing and
 gnashing of teeth. Matt. xiii. 42.

THE NARROW.

Its gate is strait . . . Matt. vii. 14.
 Its way is light . . . John viii. 12.
 Its paths are truth . . . Ps. xxv. 10.
 It is trod by those
 who forsake sin . . . 1 Pe. iii. 10, 11.
 who do the will of
 God Matt. vii. 21.
 who serve the Lord
 Christ Col. iii. 24.
 It leads to Happiness Ps. lxiv. 10.
 Life Matt. vii. 14.
 Eternal Glory. 1 Peter v. 10.
 Its end is HEAVEN,
 where there is ful-
 ness of joy and
 pleasures for ever-
 more Ps. xvi. 11.

READER,

Mark! On this side you have
 DEATH!
 DAMNATION!
 SATAN!

And on this side you find
 LIFE!
 SALVATION!
 GOD!

Along which of these roads are you hastening? for in one or the other you most certainly are. Are you in the way to GOD and HEAVEN? or SATAN and HELL? A mistake, if continued to the end, will be fatal. "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark viii. 36.)

Jesus Christ says: "I am the way, the truth, and the life:

no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me." (John xiv. 6.)
"He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life." (John vi.
47.) "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."
(John vi. 37.) "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners
to repentance." (Mark ii. 17.) "The Son of Man is come
to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke xix. 10.)

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